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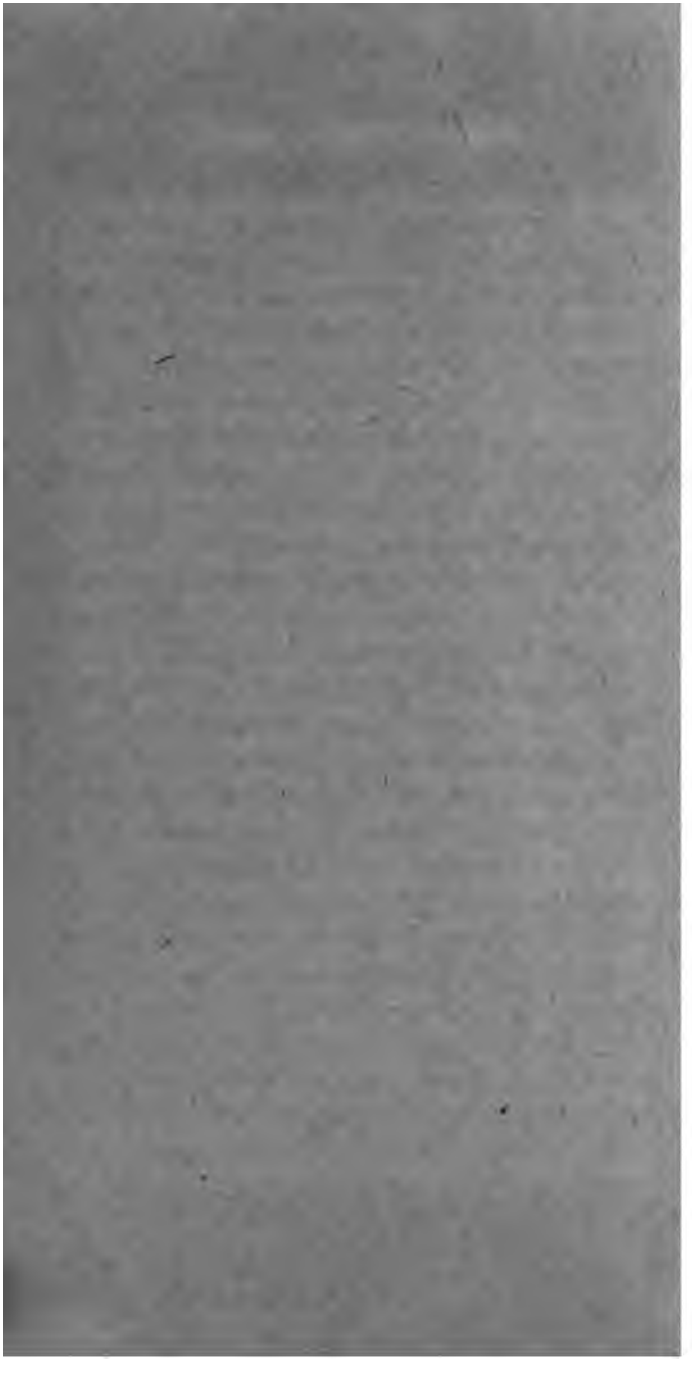
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Kenealy



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# EDWARD WORTLEY MONTAGU.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

Edward Vaughan Hyde Kenealy, 1819-18

IN THREE VOLUMES.




יום אולד כו

"Let the day perish in which I was born."

M
2057

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But a certain man named Ananias with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession. . . . Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost? . . . Then fell down she straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost; and the young men came in and found her dead, and carrying her forth, buried her by her husband. ... ... ... ... 1

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# EDWARD WORTLEY MONTAGU.

## CHAPTER XIV.

"But a certain man named Ananias with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession. . . . Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost? . . . Then fell down she straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost; and the young men came in and found her dead, and carrying her forth, buried her by her husband."

FAIR and beautiful art thou, O, Morning Star! Thou gleamest high in the blue heaven; the purple waves awaken into light, and watch thy golden brightness on their crests. I sit within my moveless gondola, and gaze aloft; I think me of the olden days when *she* also shone; when she, who was fairer to my soul than all the host of heaven, lived and beamed, and shed her lustre on

my heart. O, days! O, long lost days! never once to be forgotten—limned in splendour, yet in darkness and in grief upon my spirit, to perish only when that spirit perishes, if die it ever should. How shall I recall ye? How shall I endure to live again in the blank past, and awaken memories that should repose for aye? How shall I retrace the bitter woe, the agony of recollection, the frenzy of my love, despair and madness; and yet survive to pen them down on paper, and calmly read them in my solitude? Yet must the effort be made—a pang, and resolution comes; the iron-cased and conquering resolution that never yet forsook me in my need; and my hand and heart are nerved alike, and cold and firm as steel. O, star of beauty, shine upon me with propitious light! For well I know that in thy luminous sphere she now abides and looks upon the lone recluse, the weary wanderer—the Ishmael of men, whom once she loved. And often in the dawn she visits me in dream—visits me, and fills me with the music of the spheres. She comes to me from thee; she descends from thy silver orb; she presses my lips and whispers hope into my heart. She says, "I am not dead; I am but gone before. In the Morning Star we yet shall meet, and in our union, think not of the melancholy earth."

Thou art gone mine own; thou art lost to me indeed. For a brief space only didst thou gild my darkness. We heard the songs of Paradise; we heard them but for a moment, and all was chaos. Yet, oh how vividly that moment lives within, around, and through me. Other wandering lights have flitted on my path—other false fires have dazzled and misled the pilgrim of misfortune. But never once wert thou erased from my soul; never once was thy celestial image hurled from the altar on which, as in some sacred temple, thou wert all enshrined. O, Francesca, angel of my life, this at least is true, that never once wert thou forgotten. In the burning conflict, when foe clashed with foe, in the tumult of the tempest, in the turmoil of ambition, in the corrupt war of courts and senates, in the whirlpool of fashionable madness, in the far and silent wilderness, in the thought-uplifting mountains of the Orient, and on the whirling billows of the ocean, still, still was I thine own; and when the last moment of my life draws near, and the death pang quivers through my frame, and my heart throbs again faintly in the mortal agony, still, still, shall one image beam before me, conjoined with that of God; and that image shall be thine. Do I rave, or do I see thee now? The Morning Star opens her golden gates; she sends thee forth

a beautiful winged spirit; thou glidest downwards over the silver tracks, over the blue waters. I see thee, and now thou art beside me. An ethereal light overshadows me. I feel thy presence; my heart is in an ecstacy. It is thou—it is thou, my Francesca, who art come again, who art come again to cheer me in my desolation; to whisper happiness, and breathe endurance and content.

Yes, she was indeed most beautiful! The pencil of Raffaele—I have seen its masterpieces—but none was fair as she. The forms of Titian and Giorgione, the bright creations of Rubens and Lely, the life-like women of Vandyke, ah! they please, indeed, the passing eye; but to me they typify a loveliness far inferior to that of Francesca. She was but thirteen when first I sought protection among the Gitanos. I saw her not for upwards of a year after. She was secluded from all vulgar observation; the sun was not permitted to shine upon her. Some strange, dark mystery seemed to hang around her very tent. My friend and tutor knew nothing of her; the old Queen of the Encampment was silent as the grave on all that appertained to the lone recluse. She was guarded like the apple of the eye. Accident alone revealed her to me, and it happened in this way.

We were encamped on Salisbury Plain. The night was fair and beautiful, ten thousand glittering stars shone in the broad heaven; shone above those sacred ruins of our grand ancestors, who brought the true and holy faith of God into England, and reared those solemn arches to His honour. I wandered away at some distance from the tent—alone with my thoughts; alone and far removed from the homely sights that ever appertain to mere prosaic life. I lifted up my heart to the Stars. I singled out the golden beaming Jupiter, and thought my fate identified with him—bright, when he was glorious; dark, when he was dimmed. The distant bark of the watch-dog alone reminded me that I was in the neighbourhood of life. I wandered farther and farther until even this was but faintly echoed. Then did I give myself wholly up to reverie. My musings probably were not highly philosophic or profound; what musings of a boy ever were so? but I can now feel that they were sublime and pure; that they were wholly disconnected with earth, and all the base and wretched properties of that theatrical and tinsel puppet show which we call existence. At length I retraced my steps, and had nearly reached the place of encampment, when I beheld a tall figure gliding noislessly about the great pillars, like the spectre of some

ancient priest of Boodh, or Brahm—for are not both the names of the One God? I was myself at the moment in such a position that I must have been invisible; but the form of the stranger stood out distinctly against the gleaming purple. A wanderer or a watcher at that late hour was a mystery, perhaps a danger in disguise. He presented all the tokens of a spy, and it became my duty to observe him. I stole with panther-like tread through the prostrate ruins; I glided like a serpent to the very monolith beside which the stranger stood, and yet he knew not that I was near. He seemed gazing with the most fixed earnestness in the direction of our tents; all the energies and faculties of his mind seemed concentrated into his eyes. As a sentinel on the eve of some long-expected battle, when all before him is wrapped in darkness, and even the bivouac fires smoulder in the gloom, peers into the obscure to catch the least glimpse of an advancing foe, for well he knows his life depends upon his vigilance—even so was the anxious gaze of this man upon the far-off tents of my companions. He seemed fixed to the spot, and thus he stood motionless for half an hour. At length I heard a light and cautious footstep, then a low and quick whistle, and one emerged suddenly, though from what quarter it was impossible for me to

see; nor could I at first distinguish whether it was a man or a woman. But all doubt was soon dispelled. It was a man, and one of the Gitanos. He was called Antonio. He came up right to the very side of the watcher, and I could see him plainly by the starlight. Nay, I think my boding heart had divined who he was, even before it beheld him so near me. I crouched closer beneath the shade and ruin, and felt certain that no one but with lion eyes would be able to detect me in the gloom. Luckily I was right. Both were probably too much wrapped up in their own thoughts to notice anything around them. Their faculties were concentrated only on one point, and in this I felt was my chief security. For this Antonio was no ordinary man. He was no unobservant drudge. He was short and thick, low in the forehead, like Fox; large in the back of his head, like Bute; his dark eyes peered out from underneath hanging brows, like ferret's out of a cage; they were restless and ever changing, as you must have seen a rat's eyes are. I have seen plenty of such fellows in Westminster Hall. Wherever you turned he seemed to be watching you. There was an ever-moving, glittering expression about them. They seemed as volatile as quicksilver. You never could fix, or catch them in the same position for more than an instant.

They gave you a most unpleasant feeling. I had always disliked this fellow. Believing faithfully in the Indian doctrine of metempsychosis, I was convinced that his next phase of being would be that of a rat, or some such hideous creature, and I kept out of his path as carefully as I could.

This vagabond now accosted the watcher.

"Have I kept your lordship waiting?" he said, "I fear that I have, but I made all the haste I could. I half suspect that I am watched!"

"Pooh!" answered the other, "that is impossible. What news?"

"She would have been out to-night as usual, my lord, but her attendant was unwell, so she stayed within to nurse her."

"And how long will this illness last?"

"Oh! no time—she will doubtless take her accustomed walk to-morrow night. Let your lordship then be ready."

"At what hour?"

"Nine."

"'Tis well, till then—take this!" and he flung him a purse, and turned away. The gipsy stole towards our watch fires. I waited until he was out of sight, and then taking a circuitous route, I ran as if I were winged and got to the encampment before him. When he arrived there, I was quietly seated in front of my own tent with

Manasam. Antonio passed and wished us good night. We returned it, and he went on. As he disappeared I heard a death shot ringing in mine ears; I saw a conflict, and it was for life or death; a mortal struggle, a weeping female, a finely dressed man—and then I heard the whizzing bullet and the last scream of guilty horror. A red film of gore seemed to pass before my eyes, and all was bright and clear again. Satanas had got another subject.

"Well," I uttered, "so be it."

When I turned to my companion I was startled to see his fixed gaze upon me. He seemed stricken with a strange awe; his eyes penetrated my heart and spirit.

"Zala-Mayna," said he, "Zala-Mayna—what means this? Are you mad, or dreaming?"

"How now," I answered, "what's the matter? who fired?"

"My poor boy," said he, "you have fatigued yourself with this wild ramble, go to bed—go to bed."

"Who fired?" said I, "who is shot?"

"No one that I know of," he answered, "but speak."

I then recounted to him in a low whisper what I had witnessed and heard beside the giant pillar of the plain, and told him also what had just

passed before my eyes. He was silent for a time. He then said—

"Come, let us go into our tent."

When we got there, and had interchanged thought for half an hour, we concerted measures for the following night. These were soon arranged. I flung myself on my bed, and slept. And I had a dream, and my dream was beautiful. For the Morning Star descended from his throne in heaven and came into my presence glorious, like a youth of God, and kissed my lips, and left celestial fire upon them, and then departed with a smile, which seemed to say, "Be prosperous, O Son of Fate!" And when I woke, the early sun shone full upon me, and the larks made sweet melody, and I felt secure and strong.

* * * * *

"And were they indeed gods who built Stonehenge, nurse?"

"Aye, little one, the gods of India, from whom we are descended, and who guard us still."

"And why did not the gods preserve their beautiful temple until now? Methinks that having brought these huge stones so far from heaven they might have kept them ever in perfection."

"Ah! little one, these are questions that no mortal can solve."

"And shall we ever see those glorious, mighty gods?"

"Yes, indeed, let us hope so, and that soon."

"And are they as beautiful as you said?"

"Beautiful! they are more beautiful than the sun. Each one is twelve feet high, splendid as light, and pure as diamond. Their wings are silver—white as moonbeams. Their diadems are living fire; their words are like sweet harps."

"Oh, how I long to see those splendid gods, will you not take me soon to their country? It is India—is India far away?"

"Many a day's sail, and many a night's journey is India; but when we get there we shall see the gods."

There was a shrill whistle, at which the young damsel and her nurse startled. We crouched closer beneath our column. All around was clear moonlight, but we were in shadow. Two figures suddenly rushed upon them—they were Antonio, and the man he called "my lord."

"You must come with us," said the latter; and he laid hold of the young girl. In doing so her face became revealed in the moonlight; her hood had fallen off. It was the face of an angel. All heaven seemed open in that innocent countenance. The eyes were softly, darkly blue; the hair was golden and lustrous, like the Evening Star re-

flected on a lake; the skin was whiter than Italian marble. No sculptor ever carved a form so transcendent; no painter ever drew one. I could have fallen before her on my knees as if she were the Holy Spirit.

She did not scream, but stood as if surprised. She seemed puzzled to know what this man could want with her. She merely said—

"Oh! no, sir, I must go home; it is now time. This is my nurse; yonder are our tents."

"You must come with me," said my lord; and he began to pull her away. But now the nurse interposed. She demanded fiercely what they wanted. My lord made no reply. Antonio, who was masked, swore at her, and told her to be still.

"Ah!" said she, "I know your voice;" and she tore off his mask. She had scarcely done so when he stabbed her. She fell.

"Now, my lord," said he, "lose no time;" and he caught the little maid and began to gag her. But scarcely had he laid his rude hand upon her when he fell dead; a shot from my pistol had done the work. My last night's vision was fulfilled. My lord trembled; he looked round, but saw no one. Dropping the child's hand, he fled with the rapidity of guilt. Manasam pursued him. I went up to the girl. She was firm, but pale as death. I accosted her in softest words, but

she seemed to hear me or to heed me not. She said, "Nurse, nurse, where are you? Come, let us go home."

A faint voice answered, "The villain has stabbed me. Help, or I shall die."

I tore off my coat, I bound up her wound, I tended her, and gave her a restorative from a flask. This revived her, and after some delay she stood up, but her tread was feeble in the extreme. "Good mother," said I, "lean on me." And I helped her forward. The damsel said not a word, but clung to her in speechless silence. We wended slowly homeward. Before we got there Manasam overtook us. "He has escaped," he said.

I was summoned next day to the nurse's tent, and went with Manasam. She was evidently dying; the seal of death was on her pale features. When we entered a faint smile of gratitude or welcome stole over her countenance, but it soon passed away. She motioned to us to sit down, and we did so.

"Zala-Mayna," said she, "I have sent for you; I have much to say, and my time is short. She whom you have saved is yours by right; from this day forth she is your betrothed. You have given her her life; that life should be henceforth given unto you. And it will be so. I have al-

ready spoken unto her, and she says it is but just. Will you pledge yourself to the dying woman to receive, to cherish, to defend her against all?"

I willingly promised. It was like the realization of a wild celestial dream. Manasam witnessed it. The dying woman seemed content. "Now," said she, "let me tell all."

"The man from whom I have got my death blow was my second husband. His name is Antonio; let him be seized and brought to justice."

I told her he was dead. She expressed no surprise. "Ah!" said she, "that is right. He has got his reward. I shall die content."

"My first husband," she continued, "was equally wicked. He stole this beautiful one while she was yet an infant. She was the sole heiress to a great estate. Her father and mother doted on her. The child of their old age, when there was no further hope of male offspring to supplant her in her fortune, she became the very light of their eyes. They worshipped her—and Devee stepped in to punish them. The father had a younger brother—the man whom you saw last night. He is now a great lord, and holds Francesca's rightful estate; but justice shall be done, and she shall put the false usurper out. He came to our tents some nine or ten years

since. My husband and he had some former dealings together, and he sought him out and found him. For an immense bribe—immense I mean to my husband, but to this fellow it was as nothing—he employed him to steal this infant, the sole obstacle between himself, a peerage, and ten thousand acres. My husband did so. He brought her to me. We were then childless. 'See,' said he, 'what a pretty babe I have found for you; she lay on the road side; she was deserted; she had no father, no mother. The gods have sent her to us, as we had none ourselves.' I believed him. I brought her up. You have seen her. Does she cast discredit on me? Your eyes say no. Well, you could not say otherwise with truth. When she was twelve years old my husband fell sick; he was dying, he was afraid. He said that he had had a dreadful dream; that he could not die until he told all; and then for the first time he confessed the truth—and what a truth it was. The father and mother had searched the whole country for their child, but could get no tidings of her. The mother died broken-hearted in six months. The father lingered yet a little longer, but he soon followed her to the grave. The brother became my lord; he jumped into the estate, and keeps it still. And my husband said, 'Nana, I cannot die until you swear

to me to restore her to her rights. I cannot rest in my grave as long as she is defrauded. Go at once to the uncle, proclaim the robbery, restore her to her own, and my spirit will rest; now it is in fire.' I made the promise he demanded. He seemed more easy, but in an hour he died in dreadful agony. Never shall I forget his cries, his imprecations, his convulsive madness. Well, he is no more."

Here she stopped. She was growing fainter and fainter. The thick damps of death stood in large drops upon her face. After a time she recommenced.

"Antonio became my second husband. I told him all. Could I do otherwise? We were then in a distant part of the country. We came here about a year ago, and kept her close. He went to my lord and demanded a great sum to hide his infamy from the world. My lord refused. He then threatened an exposure. Several interviews passed, but little of their plans he told to me. Doubtless they at length agreed, and last night's treachery disclosed their compact. My lord had always said he would pay no more money because he could not trust him. 'Give me up the girl,' he said, 'and name your own reward; she shall be safe, but in a foreign land; without this you shall have nothing.' Antonio

proposed it to me, but I refused. It was in the night. My husband's ghost stood before me. He was covered in blood; he was wrapped in fire. He wept, he screamed, he cursed at me. He gave me no rest night or day. I refused to come in to Antonio's plans. I said if you restore her not I will call the whole tribe together; I will expose you, I will expose the dead, but she shall have her rights. He pretended to agree with all I said, but now I know that it was a snare. He acted but to lull me. He knew that we walked out at night; he prepared this plot, doubtless, for an immense price, but he was deceived. He betrayed himself—he fell into his own pit. Well, it is right and just; but I also am punished for my weakness. I also suffer this because I reinstated her not myself, but entrusted that sacred duty to a knave. Ha! what see I? It is my husband's phantom. He comes to drag me with him into ruin. Now, now he approaches—keep him away, keep him away—O God! O good friends, keep him away. Ah! he is upon me. He will not be removed. He will not pardon. He will not forgive me for my broken oath. Yet I was not wholly guilty; all my intentions were good. O friends, save me—save me from this appalling vision. He seizes me by the throat—he chokes—he strangles—he slays me. Oh!"

She died in agony. We were affrighted with a wild horror. Alas! she took the secret of Francesca's birth with her. It was lost for ever.

We buried both next day in the same grave; the deceived wife, the treacherous husband. We piled a small mound of stones over them, and left the place of blood. No one enquired how Antonio perished; but Manasam called the tribe together. He recounted all, even from the beginning. We were betrothed the same day; I and Francesca. No one lifted up a murmur for the death of this accursed scoundrel; every heart felt, confessed, and knew that it was his fate—his merited fate.

Among the Gitanos, when a couple are betrothed, they wander not together alone. This were infamy—for their women must not even be suspected. They are all chaste. The highest-born princess of Europe is not so modest in every thought and word as the poor Gitana who sleeps under the tent, with only the bright stars to be her sentinels. But the Queen gipsy took compassion on our youth. Francesca, too, was not a Gitana, and I was the sent of the Eagle. She said, "These must not abide in all things by our laws. Let them be together; let them pass the next year in sweet communion, side by side. He will not harm her. I know it by his eyes. Even

if he tried, the Gods of Brightness would defend her. Let it be;" and so it was. We walked thenceforth together; we went wherever we pleased. The Gipsy-queen received her into her tent, and in a year our nuptials were to take place.

## CHAPTER XV.

"Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God, my God. Where thou diest, I will die; and there will I be buried; the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me."

And what a year was that! Nature herself seemed all propitious. Never shone the sun more beautifully over the earth; never bloomed the flowers and the trees with more vernant brightness; never gleamed the stars with lustre more divine. Ye fair and pastoral hills, how sacred ye are! ye are dedicated to an everlasting holiness in my heart. We strayed over their smooth undulations, and gazed upon the distant ocean, blue and sparkling, like the seas in heaven; we descended to the dappled beach, white with

many a shell, and, hand in hand, wandered by its resounding margin; now watching the great waves as they rolled, and boomed, and broke in glittering fragments upon the beach; now gazing upon the transparent fall of emerald which they mimicked when the evening sun shone through their curling depths; now hearkening to their wild chorus when they hoarsely broke upon the strand; and now charmed with the soft and fairy-like whisper with which they glided over the soft sand, and melted away within its bosom, as if too gentle to do ought but touch it with their slightest kiss. We looked upon the West, and saw the Golden Palaces of the Sun; we lingered until the Evening Star arose, and roved in fancy amid the lakes, the gardens, the deeply purple glens, and castellated halls that seemed to live and glitter in the sky, and offer us a home of peace within that far-off Paradise.

Francesca, though now fifteen, was a perfect child. The calm seclusion in which she had been brought up had made her wholly ignorant of the world, or its ways. She was so fair that to her nurse it seemed a profanation to dye that lily skin; she was so gentle and so pure that she had not the heart to expose her to the rude gaze even of her own people. She guarded her as they guard the sacred Caaba in the fane of Mecca. No pro-

fane eye had ever shed its evil light upon her loveliness. The gypsy who had stolen her had always impressed upon his wife the necessity of keeping her away from view. When he was dying, and the terrible secret of his heart was at length revealed, solitude had become so much her habit, that she and her nurse continued it from choice. The Queen of the Encampment was the only person to whom the latter disclosed the circumstances under which she had become possesed of her; and it was principally under the guidance of the Queen that the nurse had urged Antonio to seek the usurping lord, and extort from his fears, if not from his justice, the tardy recognition of Francesca's rights. How both were disappointed has been seen.

Thus brought up in solitude and silence, seldom coming forth into the world, except when the moon and stars were in their glory, and wholly kept apart from aught that could stain her pure mind, her character was in a great measure wholly different from that of other females, and she seemed to be the denizen of a different sphere. When I first knew her, she could neither read nor write; her mind was that of a young mountaineer; a crystal tablet all unmarked, but yet as beautiful as a seraph's soul. In a little time she learned both accomplishments, and when

I opened to her this world of wonders, sweet and boundless was her gratitude. This task was exquisitely delightful; her innocent surprise at all she heard was the most rapturous reward I could have received. I told her all the faëry lore I knew myself; of the little hill men who dwell in topaz palaces beneath the earth, and the nymphs that fill the shell and coral caves of ocean; of the elves and water-necks, the trolls and dwarfs; the fair invisible existences that connect the race of mortals with the angelic choir above them, and the glorious Essences that dwell in light. From these I lifted up her mind to the celestial tenants of the stars, and taught her how in ancient ages they stood before the Throne of God, each a sun in brightness and magnificence, until the schism rose which first divided the sons of Heaven, and separated Light from Darkness.

I told her of the soul and its immortal splendour, its heavenly origin, and final hope; how it became a wanderer from the Gardens of Eden, that have their place high with God; how it suffered, and wept, and ever longed to return to its primal home; how it was clogged and fettered by the flesh, the world, and temptation, but how it finally should triumph over all obstacles, and be numbered once again among the golden,

shining bands of the Father and the King. I spoke to her of the innumerable spheres of light which rolled in silence over our heads—each one a world inhabited by splendid Existences, entirely different from men, as men differ from birds and insects, fishes or flowers; and taught her how these Star-dwellers lifted up their thoughts to the All-Father, and were filled with reverence and love, even as all created beings should be. I gave my fancy wings, and endeavoured to depicture the many grades and orders of happiness which in perpetual Cycles revolve around the Divine Centre; and thus, with truth and imagination intermingled, I sought to colour her soul with those tints of beauty which make it wholly perfect. Why did I not confine myself to plain matter of fact? Because I hate it, because it is detestable, because it is false, because it is lowering and degrading. When we soar in fancy above this clay, we are near to God; when we chain ourselves down to one, two, three, and carry nought, we are very sober, decent, tradesmanlike persons, but are only earthly, carnal, grubbing moles.

"Oh! Zala-Mayna," she would say, "how thankful ought I to be to the good God that he has sent you here to us. The old Queen calls you Eagle-sent. Are you indeed so?"

"I believe, indeed, I am Heaven-sent to you, my sweet Francesca."

"Whether Heaven or an Eagle sent you, I know not; but however it may have happened, it was a happy hour for both."

"Nay, it was more happy still for me than you, for have I not your love?"

She hung down her head in silence; but I looked into her violet blue eyes, and saw her heart imaged in their light.

"But how came it that you have learned all these wonderful things? You are not much older than myself."

"I have always been a hard worker, Francesca; and I have had hard teachers, too, and of late a sage one; but best of all are you."

"Why what could I teach you, Zala-Mayna?"

"The flower and fruit of knowledge—endurance of life, of man. Until I knew you I hated myself—I hated almost everyone in the world. I disbelieved in virtue, for I had never seen any; I had no faith in truth, or honesty, or chastity. My whole existence was poisoned. I believe I cursed God for letting me come into being. But now I bless Him, and I begin to feel that love, and charity, and soft-eyed gentleness are germinating in my heart; and I could even forgive my enemies their crimes."



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"And what crimes have they committed against you, Zala-Mayna?"

"The worst—the crimes of blind, unreasoning hatred, for no cause; a mother's detestation—a father's cold forgetfulness—a sister's enmity. Why am I an exile and a wanderer? Why am I the associate of these wild people? For I am not of their breed, or blood, or kindred. Why?—but because I have been wronged, like Ishmael, and like Ishmael's glorious children may I have revenge."

"Oh, Zala-Mayna, you frighten me. Said you not but now that love and gentleness were in your heart? Whither are they gone?"

"One word of thine, Francesca, brings them back. When I have wedded thee, I will put reins over my proud heart. I will go home and seek my father; I will fall on my knees before him. I will present my angel to him. He will see and love thee; he will forgive the past; he will embrace his son; he will take us to his heart and home. Then shall my Francesca assume her proper place; then shall we unveil the treacherous kinsman who has robbed her."

The sun grew faint and dark as I spoke these words; his disk was covered with a dun cloud; a chill—a foreboding crept over my spirit. What! was this blessing then to be denied? I shuddered;

I dared not think it would be so. Had God wholly left me?

"That will be indeed pleasant, Zala-Mayna. But I would not have thee count upon success in restoring me to that which I have lost. It will not weaken thy love, dearest, if it fail?"

"No, Francesca, my love is for ever, as I hope thine is."

"And so is *my* love, also, Zala-Mayna; for you are all the world to me. Before I knew thee, I was dead. Now I am alive and happy. If my life could serve thee, I would give it. For you have given me more than life; you have given me a soul, which I had not until I knew and learned from thee."

Thus we talked and speculated—and Nemesis, I suppose, heard us, and laughed behind that dun cloud. And what is Nemesis? Have you ever thought, wise student?

Much of our time was spent on the water. I had put together a rude boat, which was just capable of containing three persons—myself, Francesca, and a young Gitana, who sometimes accompanied us. The boat carried a small sail, and from long practice I had grown fearless, and cared not what winds blew, or waves rolled; secure in a sort of consciousness of invulnerability which has always accompanied me, and I

believe preserved me through the greatest dangers. I have never yet been wounded, and I know I never shall. Yet I have passed through war and terror more than most men, and have wrestled for life in dreadful conflict on the land and sea. What life can be compared to this? life in the free open beam of Nature, amid her hills, and by her waters, beneath her blue and smiling skies, and her stars of lights? The very atmosphere seemed loaded with purity; the whole aspect of all that was around us seemed ineffably sacred. Our tent existence was a dark, prosaic spot, indeed, in this delicious picture, for there we came in contact with strange and wild characters, now homely, now earth-born in the extreme; but when we were away in the silent, green, and lonely Downs, on which the sun glittered with resplendent softness, and over which the choir of larks, and blackbirds, and thrushes warbled with the wildest melody, and in strains that poured gladness through the vital being; when we reclined among the wild thyme, or amid beds of violets, and heath, and clover with which the place was filled, and gazed upon the solemn, grand, majestic wall of ocean in the sapphire distance, over which the silver sea-gull twinkled, or some solitary ship moved in full sail; or when we looked aloft into the purple heaven above us, and fashioned to

ourselves the fancy of some lovely sphere to which our spirits might ascend, and go through scenes of wonder, and delight, and rare achievement—then, indeed, we were most happy; for we were far removed from all that makes actual life a thing of dullness and routine, except in those fiery passages of war, or travel, or adventure, which are so rare, and so exciting. To pass one's time with Nature is always sweet; this the anchorites of old felt; her heavenly calm impenetrates our essence and makes us like herself; but when love like ours becomes a portion of the life so passed, there is no dweller in a palace, or wearer of a crown whom I would envy for a moment. And ye, O green and shining waters, receive, I pray ye, the gratitude of my soul. To ye I owe most fervent thanks for days and evenings of delight, when my spirit became a part of yours; and I felt that holy kindred with the Universal of which ye are so bright a portion. We sailed along a little lagune which flows up just below the green meadows, where, under the arch of a few old trees, our camp was pitched; we bore our light skiff over the barrier of beach which divided this from the open sea, and launched it on its purple bosom. The gentle winds filled the white sail, and wafted us smoothly into the full ocean; there we cast our

nets and snared the fish, or mused over some favourite volume, for I had now procured a few books; and Tasso, Ariosto, and Dante became alike companions of our love-winged hours. We lived again in the days of knighthood and enchantment. We meditated on the spirit-secrets of the Dark Unknown, to which the lonely Florentine led us as it were in dream. I told her of my past life, its follies, failings, and aspirations. I recounted the odd scenes into which chance had thrown me, and contrasted the drawing-room, or the assembly, their artificial lights and poison-breathing flowers, and hollow habitants, with that in which we now moved. As we both reflected more and more on the falseness that is the distinguishing characteristic of towns and polite people, we turned to each other with renewed happiness; and feeling all the rapture of our situation on which no evil eye intruded, on which no female tongue vented its venom, on which no snake-like heart effused its malice, we thanked the errant chance that had thus brought together two spirits so congenial, fervent, and united.

## CHAPTER XVI.

"My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her, and they blessed her, yea the queens and the concubines, and they praised her. Who is She that looketh forth as the Morning, fair as the Moon, clear as the Sun?"

He who hath not known love let him die. To him the great Mysteries of Life are a sealed volume. He is but half a man; and when he passes away from earth he passes as an incomplete being, whose mission among his brethren has been unfulfilled. For there is no passion that awakens the heart and evokes its mystic faculties but this. Ambition—I have felt it, but it is a base and selfish feeling; its every energy is concentrated into one focus, for the individual advancement of the labourer, the two-legged mite, who wishes to be worshipped by other

mites. Avarice is the same; the pride of knowledge is also a poor selfish thing; but love alone is a dual divinity; its hopes, efforts, and objects are all shared with another, and that other is the better and purer half of our own nature. O woman! how true, how noble, how heavenly a being thou art! I have read and heard of men at whose name the world bows the knee, and have been taught to think in honour of their heroism; but the true, the sole, the great and perfect heroic, exists in Woman only—or if there be an exception among Men, it is only that it may prove the rule to be true which I have first enunciated. There have been moments when I would have curled the lip at any man who spake this truth, and sneered him down as most unworthy of his race; when I would have smitten him to the dust with a mocking glance and a satirical smile, as one but fitted to comb a lap-dog, or be "brained by my lady's fan;" but in the confessions of my heart I will not lie, nor deceive myself or others. I will put forth the broadly honest opinions of my soul, founded upon experience and reflections. Man is intellectually superior, but morally inferior to Woman; and all the great things of the earth will be found on examination to have been inspired, fostered, and fed under the sunshine of female auspices.

It would be easy to prove this, by reference to history and biography; but this is not a disquisition. Let him who questions it enquire with an honest spirit, and he will find that I am right. He will trace back every noble discovery, either in art or science; every holy principle of philanthropy that has been reduced into practical action; every institution that redeems earth from ignominy, and gives a glimpse of the Paradise Gardens from which we are hapless exiles, to the guiding influence of sacred Woman. From her the philosopher has learned the truest love; the soldier the most lofty courage; the navigator the rarest patience; the poet the purest sentiment. Open the historic page, and every line is full of feminine devotion and grandeur of soul, faithfulness in affliction, courage in misfortune, wisdom in the midst of danger, hope when whirled in the eddies of despair. Accursed ever be the wretch who injures but in thought one of this sacred race of beings. May God eternally exclude him from light, and mankind spit upon him, living as well as dead. This is my prayer. So be it! So be it!

Think not, O grave and stolid man, that I am an enthusiast because I have known and loved one perfect woman. I know the sanity of that species of philosophy which judges generally from

units. I know how wild would be the delusion of supposing that all women are alike great and holy, because I happen to be acquainted with one who combined within herself greatness and holiness. I have not said that all women are alike; I should be mad if I were to say it. I have met women that were baser than wolves. I have not compared all women with my Francesca. I should be a dupe or a liar if I had done so, for I have seen some that were as fiends. But all that I have said implies this and no more, that comparing Woman with Man, the former is immeasureably his superior in all that elevates our race above mere earthliness; and that Men would be a horde of savages, or worse, if they were not humanised, and even etherealised by the benign influence of Women. I know that men have become effeminate, and women have become detestable, when female power was in the ascendant over the male, as it is in France at this moment; but I speak not of a state of things which is the result of vice, but that which is the inevitable consequence of virtue.

Let me have done, however, with moralising. It is at all times dull work, and never more so than when introduced into a Life Story, which must depend upon its facts for its value. This book is a record of things that actually took

place. Let those who *will*, draw their own lessons from the circumstances narrated; and if they do not like my conclusions, let them adopt their own as better. I shall not quarrel with them, but leave them to their self applause. I have lived too long and seen too much to regard myself as anything but most fallible; and I am quite sure that for one sensible thing I may say or write, I both avow and think fifty foolish ones. I claim credit only for this—that in all I say I am sincere; and that if I am constrained to appear undutiful or severe in portraying the lineaments of one woman, her who gave me birth, it is from no hatred of the sex, but from scorn of one who in reality was of no sex, but a heartless being devoid of all true or natural feeling. I never wronged her, yet she always loathed me; she laboured all her life to destroy me as far as she could; and she carried her hatred with her to the grave. I have endeavoured to forgive her; but when I sat down to compose this volume, I was resolved to write my very soul itself in every page; and what a rascal should I have been if I had spared this woman, and written down a heap of lies because, forsooth, she gave me birth!

The sun shines sweetly in the heaven; I see the sparkling distant sea, lit by ten million glittering splendours. The rich blue sky canopies

the deep waters; all is peace, beauty, and divineness. I lean back in my chair and let my thoughts wander back into the Past. I dream a dream of exquisite fancy. A series of pictures rises up before my memory like those that gleam upon us as we muse over Spenser's Faërie Queen; but they are indescribable. Their evanescent tints are gone before I can commit them to the dull paper. I cast my eyes backwards, far, far over my whole pilgrimage, and it is a varied one; but is at times brightened by sweet scenes. Those of early youth are perhaps alone the pleasantest—yet are not they wholly without a cloud?

O Francesca! my own, my loved, my fond twin-heart!—where art thou now? Shinest thou upon me from the heaven of light, where alone thy dwelling place can be? Hast thou revisited earth to bring me comfort in my loneliness? Oh! where art thou? Thou seest how I love thee—albeit, thou art lost to mine embrace; yet in thy pure spirit must abide one strong conviction, that thou alone wert as my soul's second self, and that losing thee I lost all. I dream of thee on my lonely couch; in the day when I walk forth I see and feel thee in the surrounding sunshine. When the bright and warm rays play around me, methinks it is thy clasp I feel;

when the stars glitter over me at midnight methinks it is thy smile, thy vigilant eye of love that effuses its beam above my form, and beckons me to yonder glowing spheres. I move upon the ocean, and I am conscious of thy presence; I wander into the mountain, and I know that thou art there; a magnetic effluence from all surrounding beautiful objects glides through me, and speaks to me of thee. Music;—when I hearken to it, it is thy witching speech I hear; the rainbow;—when I look upon it, it is thy softening presence; the breath of flowers, when they charm me;—it is thy breath I feel; the wind whispers amid the pine trees, and lo! it is thy voice that calls to me from heaven. When I recall those bygone days, how beautifully they revive in heavenly brightness. Methinks I was a spirit then—now I am a man; a mere man of base, muddy flesh and blood—all over animal, all over earthliness, unetherealized, disenchanted. I can scarcely fancy that I am the same. Am I the same? Answer me, O Heaven; or if thou wilt not, answer me some other Power. My feelings, sentiments, sensations, are all so altered from what they have been. I have grown so thoroughly wordly and animal-like that I can almost believe the wild theory of those who tell us every man is twofold—half an angel, half a demon; and that as

the influence of each predominates, so is his life shaped. In those days I feel that I was pure. In her presence I was a spirit worthy of the Divine Presence. All my thoughts were high and august. I could no more have conceived an impure idea when my loved Francesca was beside me than I could have risen up and blasphemed God; for she was purity itself. It is said that the most venemous serpent is dazzled and blinded by the light of the emerald. Even so is it with the most wicked man in the presence of a virgin wholly chaste in thought as God himself. Such was Francesca, and such was the spell which sanctified our love.

We were entirely isolated from all the world. Over the gypsies she seemed silently to hold some wondrous spell. She was among them, but not of them. Generally speaking, they are not much inclined to yield submission to the stranger—but Francesca appeared to exercise even over the rudest, some mysterious mighty influence. They did not accost her as they were used to accost others; to me also they manifested a sort of savage deference; and as it were by common consent, we were unmolested in all things. The lonely Downs were ever ours; the green dales, in which only were a few wandering sheep, formed our favourite walk. When the sun was bright,

we crept into a shepherd's hut, and looked upon the distant sea, which seemed to rear its sapphire sparkling wall against the land. But for some wandering barque, it would have resembled a solid barrier of glittering gems. Here also was our shelter when the rain fell—but this is a rare event in this southern clime. What was our employment in those hours, it may be asked? In truth we had none. We sat silent; we sat entranced. For both it was delight enough to hold the hand within the hand; to look into the eyes, and give utterance to the heart in a sigh; to breathe some simple vow of love into the ear; to watch the light that beamed in the happy smile, or the lustre that played over the rosy lip, and then fall back into mute reverie. Love scenes are said to be tedious in description. No wonder, for there is nothing in them that can be described. They are all such as I have narrated.

But there was one feeling, which above all others was deeply impressed upon the heart of this sweet and dreaming child of beauty—the feeling of Religion—let me add, without presumption, that I laboured all I could to foster it; for without dependence and belief in God, what is man, and what is life? Heaven knows I am no puritan, and my career has been wild, way-

ward, and eccentric, but never have I forgot Him who is above all; nor ever have I ceased to breathe this name into the heart of any who would listen. But my Francesca was naturally pious and good. Her pure and heavenly heart was in harmony with pure and heavenly things. Akiba had given a solemn tinge to my own mind; the old man had so long outlived the vanities of earth, and had so fully experienced that in life there is, after all, nothing certain but the Future, and the Lord of the Future, that he had often checked my youthful folly, and brought me back from mere earthliness to themes of heaven and immortal life. I was a boy, indeed—yet I hope with feelings that were not wholly boyish; and though I could not venture to dictate to her, yet I could direct her thoughts where they needed it. But they flowed naturally into religion, holiness, and purity. She was unperplexed by schools or systems; her religion was the outpouring of the heart to God in gratitude, in veneration, in faith; the three essentials which, as it seems to me, constitute the whole secret of the truly religious spirit. She loved Him not because of liturgies or theories, but because she felt he deserved her love—and the love of all his creatures, no matter how lowly they may be.

She lifted up her sweet eyes to Heaven, and

saw the Supreme everywhere—in His golden, beaming stars, peopled with everlasting existences; in His rainbow, which we are told is the canopy of His everlasting throne of splendour—in His moon, the nearest of all His spheres to this our wandering earth—bright luminary of the blue heaven, whose presence is like soft music to the contemplative heart; in His sun, that emblem of himself, which ever and ever revolves in light and beauty, and brings happiness and health whenever he appears. Nor did she recognize the Holy One in these only—they are such vast and wondrous evidences that they flash conviction even upon the dullest. But in the minutest of His works she saw Him not less clearly manifested. The mountain towering in sublime grandeur was not more clearly indicative of His power, than the little mite which ran over the leaf, and which in the minutest form presented all the functions of a living being, with heart, brain, eyes, veins, and muscles—may I add, a soul. For who can doubt every living thing is immortal and can never die? The blue and silver arch of heaven every moment presenting new and glorious aspects, was not a more certain demonstration of the Eternal One, than the leaf of the rose tree, which shewed in its minute ramifica-

tions of veins, and nerves, and arteries, the astonishing benevolence of God, who wills not that even a bit of herbage shall be without its happiness; and who provides for that happiness by giving it all those fine and delicate fibres of organization which are of the same nature as those that pervade the brain and heart of man, and lift him from the earth to God.

One day she fell on her knees before me. I had been wayward, foolish, inconsiderate, importunate. Methinks I see her now. Her hat was half suspended on her shoulders; her hair in wild ringlets hung down her snowy neck; her white robe shone like the raiment of some celestial spirit. But her eyes—who can paint their heavenly expression of sadness, passion, and undying fondness? She wept; she held my hands in hers; she kissed them a thousand times; she hung her head on my lap. Her look, so full of loveliness, besought love, sympathy, protection. The sunshine fell around us in golden showers; the birds sang; the heaven rejoiced in light; the distant ocean sparkled like one of the rivers of Indra; the wind bore the fragrance of the violets that were thickly bedded on the adjoining hillock. I raised her to my heart; I folded her as if I should never lose her again.

What mighty passion then convulsed our souls? Either would at that moment have sacrificed life for the welfare of each other.

"My own darling Edward," she said, "say again, and again, that you will never leave me?"

"Never, Francesca—never will I leave thee while life lasts."

"Yet I feel a sad presentiment of evil. Do you believe in presentiments?"

"Why do you ask me, dearest, if you are certain of my love?"

"Yes—I am certain of your love, but this condition seems too heavenly to last, and my heart is sad, and my hopes are clouded."

"Love me, and then you will not be sad."

"Oh! I cannot love you more than I now do. It is the very force of my love that makes me fear we shall be parted."

"Fear not, my Francesca—but even if we are, know that it will be but for a time. Your soul and mine are one. Nothing can disunite them. Death may separate, but after death—there is God—"

"Well then, I shall hope on—convinced that death, if nothing else, will make us one."

"In that hope abide, my own love, and then nothing can make you sad."

And hand in hand we descended from the Downs, and launched our little boat. The wind blew freshly; we sped along the lagune, and watched the wavering sail and flitting clouds, and she nestled by my side, as with a guiding hand I managed sheet and rudder. We passed out into the deep waters. The waves rose in azure light above our prow; there was an emerald track behind us where we had cut the green and yielding sea. We went out into the deep waters. It was little more than noon. All was still, sunny, heavenly, bright. The ocean was like a sleeping child. The sun gleamed on the verdant laughing hills; the far off cottages and villas sparkled like snow on the distant shore. Every feature of the scene was placid and delightful. We saw the sauntering horseman glide along the inland highway; we watched the sea-birds skimming over the marble-like face of ocean; we leaned back in the boat and were happy, if ever children of the earth were happy.

Thus the lazy hours passed, and thus it was for months. On land, we chased the butterfly, or gathered thyme; on sea we cast our nets, and captured the many-coloured fish. And books also were our companions; and when books tired, Francesca sang, and sweetly rolled her voice over those blue waters. The echo entered my soul;

it melted my very heart. I was like a spirit of love embodied in human form. At times too, we brought a flute with us, and as I had acquired some skill in playing, I often made the distant Downs re-echo the soft melody, that floated along the sea like some water nymph. Meanwhile our wandering boat skimmed listlessly about, we cared not how or whither. When we got into deep water, I furled the sail, and gave her up to chance to waft her as it willed. There was a wild excitement in thus surrendering our souls to the present, and living in the summer day sunshine without a thought or care. And when we woke out of our ecstatic dreams, it often happened that we found ourselves far and far away from land, and reached the shore at night with difficulty.

On one of these excursions the sun had been particularly powerful; not a breath stirred the sea. Our boat lay still as if she had been fastened into the solid emerald; there was not wind enough even to lift the light vane that she carried at her mast head. We were weary. I pulled the sail over our heads, and we lay down in each other's arms. We mused awhile, and then fell asleep. And a dream appeared above us. A fair woman, but her eyes were sad, and there was sorrow painted in her face; she gazed

on us for a long time with an indescribable look of love and hope, and tenderness, and light. A whole eventful life was written in her clear brown eyes; my heart yearned towards her with a strange sympathy. She was richly dressed, but with a simple air, devoid of art. After contemplating us in silence, she beckoned as it were upwards, and I heard in soft voice, the words; "Come and see." And suddenly beside her stood a man, not very tall, but with a commanding presence, and noble bearing. She cast her eyes downwards upon us and smiled; he also did the same, and each looked upon the other, and a heavenly ray played over their features. They now stood by my side, and my heart seemed gladdened. I felt an invisible energy within that seemed to uplift me from the sea, and to transport me into a distant sphere. Then Francesca rose up, I knew not whence, for I had not before seen her, and she stood between them, and they kissed her with a holy fondness, and each taking a hand, they led her towards me, and placed her in my arms, and I thought I heard these words, "Take her, she is thine, guard her as the apple of thine eye, for no purer, fairer being breathes the breath of life. We give her to thee for thine own, for thou hast saved her, and we know that in thy heart she is the shrined and loved one." And

the dream was gone and we awoke, both in the same instant, and I told her what I had seen, and we knew that it was a vision of those who had given her birth, and of whom we yet knew nothing.

## CHAPTER XVII.

"Then a Spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up; it stood still, but I could not discover the form thereof; an image was before mine eyes; there was silence, and I heard a voice."

AND now I became filled with an intense desire to know the secret of her birth and history. Francesca remembered nothing herself; she had been stolen away at a period when memory can scarcely be said to exist. I often questioned her, but she strove in vain to recall a glimpse of her early life. At length I mentioned my perplexity to Akiba. He listened and made answer—

"To me this is not difficult. Bring her hither."

It was with some difficulty that I could per-

suade this sweet child to a meeting with the old man. During her sojourn with the nurse, she had heard so much of his weird and eldritch powers, exaggerated as all such things are by common report, that she dreaded even to hear him named. But what will not a lover's lips persuade his beloved to do? She consented at length, and we went to the old man's tent. It was on the new moon eve; no one else was present. We found him sitting in a corner apparently in reverie. A small mukhooroo or tabernacle stood in the centre made of wicker-work, and over it was placed a brass image of some Indian deity, and half a dozen ancient looking amulets. There was also an earthen vessel of curious shape, in which frankincense, camphor, and other precious perfumes were alight and burning. The old man having a twisted silken sash of many colours, fumed it over the smoking fire, and bound it round his head, and then after a considerable pause chanted words somewhat in the following fashion:—

My being is filled with the wâren of the Supreme,
I see nought else but the All-knowing.

O wielder of the all-beaming light,
Let thy Splendour illuminate thy servant.

Let my whole form be made luminous,
My heart, my soul, my brain, my spirit.

My being is filled with the wâren of the Supreme,
I see nought else but the All-knower.

As the sun puts the darkness to flight,
Even so let thy Wisdom dispel ignorance

That I may penetrate the dim Past,
That I may behold the secrets of former days,

That I may view imaged the hidden deeds
That were done in defiance of Thee.

My being is filled with the wâren of the Supreme,
I see nought else but the All-knower.

Then concentrating his gaze with a fixed stare upon Francesca, he regarded her for about five minutes. A strange, unearthly, greenish light glittered in his eyes. He seemed possessed. His colour came and went; now his cheeks were icy pale, and now suffused with fire. But his eyes never lost that fixed and flaming emerald-coloured splendour which I have since seen only in the eyes of a hyena in the midnight hour. Then in a hollow voice the old man spake these words—

"I see a noble-looking man in the flower of life, and by his side is a fair bride. They pass from the gray old church; they are borne through a vast park, into a mansion of great extent; a double line of servants greets them with many a blessing. They are followed by a younger man, who bears a strong resemblance to the first—a brother, or some near relative. He smiles upon

the newly married pair, and offers them his warm wishes. But I see into his heart; there is a chalice of poison hidden there, and under the chalice there is the symbol of a serpent. Happy are the days and years of the young couple. But one blessing only is denied. They have no child to be the heir of their vast possessions. They have every wish gratified but this. At length a child is born, but it is a daughter. Great nevertheless is the rejoicing; the brother comes and is glad, but I see into his heart, and he meditates death or some other evil. And friends are summoned from all parts of the country to celebrate the auspicious birth, and there are young heads crowned with flowers, and old temples mantled with joy, and the ancient mansion is lit up, and all is splendour and festivity, and happiness, for another scion of that noble family is born, and its great possessions shall not pass out of the direct line. And the husband smiles upon his wife, and they look forward to years of happiness, and anticipate the career that opens for the lovely stranger who has come to them from God.

"And some years pass, and the babe is grown, and is the beauty of the whole country; golden are her flowing locks, and blue her eyes, and her skin is like the water-lotus in its sunny bright-

ness; her complexion is the rainbow's pink. And proud and happy are the parents of so fair a flower. She wanders in her father's garden—a lovely place, with balustrades of marble, and terraces with flowers, and fountains launching their silver waters into the sunny air; and her father's brother is by her side; her nurse also is there.

"It is night, and there is a gypsy tent, and the brother comes into the tent, and there is a Calero waiting for him, and him he bribes with gold, and the Calero gives him a drug, and the two men look at each other and laugh, and the stranger goes away smiling, but I can see into his heart, and I do not like the root from which that smile springs.

"And I see the garden once again, and the little one is crowned with flowers, and the female attendant who is always with her, has played on a mandoline, and sang a sweet song for the little one; and she rests on her knee, and the nurse pulls a silver flask out of her pocket—she knows not that it has been drugged—and she tastes it, and instantly she is wrapped in a deep and death-like slumber. And from behind a large tree the Calero comes, and he muffles up the little one, and disappears; and in the night he strikes his tent, and is away at a great distance.

"And on the day after a letter comes to the parents of the little one, and it bears a foreign postmark, France or Italy—I see not which, and it announces the return home of the brother, who has been absent for many weeks. And no one suspects him to be in league with the Calero to rob his brother of the child who stands between himself and the estate.

"But they—I see them stricken with a mighty grief; and first the mother pines away. Messengers have gone into all places, but no tidings of the lost one are heard. The nurse is questioned; she knows only of the death-like slumber, during which her charge was stolen, or wandered, and was lost. The child's hat is found on the banks of the river, and this gives rise to a report of drowning, and the river is searched even to the mouth of the sea, but no body is discovered, nor any trace or rumour of the lost one. And the brother arrives from a foreign land, and he gives way to loud lamentation—but I look into his heart, and I can see at the bottom of it, the chalice of poison bubbling high, and the symbol of the serpent coiling itself around in glee.

"There is an open tomb, and a hearse drawn by four horses, and a coffin covered with black velvet, and the mother's body is brought forth and deposited in the ancestral vault. She is

followed by a gray and stricken man. Can this be he who but within a few short years was the brave and noble looking bridegroom in the flower of life? Alas it is. Six months passed, and he also is borne forth in death. Desolation sits upon his house.

"The brother has become the lord of the estate. The Calero is departed; he is troubled in mind lest the Calero may restore her again, and blast his prospects and his place. But years pass and the Calero comes not. He feels contented. Suddenly he receives a letter. A new Calero comes and threatens him with disgrace. He bargains with him for gold to deliver up the girl. The compact is made. They meet; the meeting fails; the Calero is in death; the usurping lord flies away in terror. I see the semblance of two whom I know."

Here he stopped. But I had grown impatient.

"O venerable sage," I asked, "canst thou not give us any clue to the parentage of Francesca? She is my betrothed; she is the rightful owner of large possessions. What avails all, if we know not this?"

He paused, and answered, "I cannot tell names. The personages whom I see speak not audibly. I can see their lips move; I can behold their dresses and appearance; the localities in

which they act and dwell; but I cannot go beyond this. The castle that should be hers is a great and noble baronial pile; the park is vast, and crowned with beauty. It is in England, but where, I know not. This must be for thee to discover."

Then I said, "O venerable sir and teacher, where now is this false lord?"

Again he meditated, and the emerald fire flashed out of his eyes; he seemed exhausted; but seeing my importunity, he nerved himself to a great effort.

"I see him in a drawing-room in a great house. A fair lady is reclining on a sofa; she wears a loose robe, and on her brow the crescent emblem of Diana; she has a writing-desk near her, and looks as if she had but just parted with the pen. She seems to have written something that gives her pleasure. There is a case of scarlet covered books, finely gilt; there is a full length portrait of a man in ducal dress; he wears a star and garter, and has a plumed hat in his hand."

I started—this was the exact description of our drawing-room in Cavendish Square, and of the likeness of my ducal grandfather.

"Look closer, I said; look and see what is in one of the corners of the room."

The old man looked, and said—

"I see only a marble bust; it wears the semblance of a crown; but whether gold or laurel I cannot say."

I had now no doubt it was Lady Mary's own room; this was a bust which she had brought from Vienna, having received it there from one of the royal archdukes.

Akiba resumed—

"The door opens, and a tall man enters—deadly pale and cadaverous, but finely dressed, and with a courtly badge. It is the brother. His crimes write themselves in his face. He smiles, but it is a corpse-like grin. He seats himself by the lady; he takes her by the hand; he appears to make an ardent declaration of love. She shows him what she has written. He now falls on his knee before her. Shall I go on? Let me draw the curtain."

I needed no more. The usurper was then known to Lady Mary—intimate with her, as it would seem, beyond even common friendship. Why should I not discover him? But even when I had done so, how could I prove his guilt?

## CHAPTER XVIII.

"Immediately there met him out of the tombs, a man with an unclean spirit, who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no not with chains; because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces, neither could any man tame him."

About this time we were visited by a noisy, swearing, swaggering, roystering fellow, who called himself Dom Balthazar, and who looked a knave and a villain, if any one of that honourable and wide-spread confraternity ever did. There is an old maxim that, "an open countenance is a letter of recommendation;" and if this be true, it may fairly be concluded that from a face on which roguery is written, it is the duty of honest men to fly. This piece of advice, indeed, I ven-

tured to give Manasam when first this stranger—who certainly did not descend from heaven—condescended to make one among us; but my remonstrance was wholly lost upon my friend; and Dom Balthazar seemed to have made a firm footing among the tribe almost as soon as he appeared. The Zingari are generally sober and temperate; decent in discourse, and modest in recounting their exploits; but this new comer was a swill-pot and a glutton, who never seemed satisfied; and if you were to believe his own story, he had stormed every fort, succeeded in every battle, and carried every woman, whether maid, wife, or widow, that he had ever adventured upon. If you looked incredulous, or even doubtful upon any one of these golden legends, he swore so dreadfully and twirled his moustache with such an overbearing fierceness, and stamped his foot, and flashed so much fire, smoke, and fœtid vapour all about, that for the sake of peace and quiet, it seemed better to submit, and swallow any amount of lying and braggadocio than to be dragged into a war of words or blows with so redoubtable an antagonist, who would probably kill you first and gulp you down afterwards. I remember the very first visit he made to us, as well as if it were only yesterday. He walked boldly up to the chief tent of our encampment, whistling

loudly, with a long Toledo trailing and clanking after him, a military cloak, which had seen some service, if one might judge from its stains and patches, a faded feather in his hat, a pair of pistols in his belt, a cigaret stuck in his mouth, and an easy, deuce-may-care expression of recklessness about him which took the most experienced by surprise. One of the fierce dogs which usually acted as our sentinels having run out to meet him, and raised a desperate howl; putting forth a hand of iron, the new comer coolly seized him by the throat, and dashing him against the ground, left the animal half dead; muttering all the while, "Holy Jesus! What a savage beast!" So unusual a prelude would have disconcerted most persons; but Dom Balthazar took no notice of the accident, but walking up to where we all sat at supper, he took his seat uninvited, stared down the company when they examined him rather inquiringly, and began to eat away ravenously before we had recovered from our surprise. At length the elder of the feast, looking steadfastly at him was, about to speak, when our self-invited guest, anticipating his words, cried out—

"Bah, Jacomo, bah! my brother, thou knowest me, and I know thee. Let there be no nonsense between us," and he whispered into his ear, and

made him a sign at the same instant, whereat the other bent in reverence, and the new comer continued—

"Hare, rabbit, pheasant, wild duck, fish—in truth a goodly show, and hungry I am after many a weary mile and broiling day of travel and adventure. Look sharp, Jacomo, and let me have of the best, and that speedily"; and then, without waiting for reply, he helped himself to nearly half a hare, which he flung in great handfulls down his throat, that, like the wide-expanded gullet of Polyphemus, ever and ever gaped for more.

"Ho!" said he, "Ho! what news? what news. Any bloodshed in these parts? any forts to be attacked, or garrisons to be plundered? I have just come from Spain, my brothers, where the blessed little children learn to stab before they can say the Ave Maria, and the highest feather in the cap is to draw the life blood from the heart. And this I saw, my brothers, not a month ago on the French frontier, and a fine and gallant sight it was—a fine and gallant sight, my brothers, for a brave man's eyes to witness. We were a stout and bold party of contrabandistas, and as we crossed the mountains, we came up with a negro and a young girl, who was a half bred, a creole, and faith a pretty brisk and lovely

damsel enough; but how she got into the company of this accursed son of the accursed Ham was then wholly unknown to all of us. Not like your sly, mincing maids was she; no prim, demure, perfidious prude, with eyes half veiled, who seems so modest that butter won't melt in her mouth; mild as she-cats when you and the priest are looking on; but when the charming pusses are shut up alone with their spouses, or wrangling with other she-cats for his favour, ye gods! how frightfully they scratch and howl, and tear, and come to fisticuffs. And they wear their petticoats so long, and slouch their bonnets so over the face, that if a Roman could come back from hell, he'd fancy they were vestals; but quickly would he change his mind, my brothers, if he saw them in their homes, when the domino is laid aside, and the female fiend steps forth in all her brimstone. But this little one looked indeed a dainty morsel, and was a banquet for a prince. For her eyes were full and dark, and like the purple grapes that glow beneath the clustering vine leaves, and her ringlets were like the deep, violet-coloured hyacinths, that curl in a thousand tendrils; and her foot—ah! my sisters, you should have seen that pretty foot—twinkling, glancing, like a firefly under her scarlet petticoat—then would the loveliest here declare that she had

never before seen in any other woman a foot and ancle in perfection, and confess that except her own there was nothing to be compared to it on earth." And here the fellow looked at all the younger women, and winking, burst into a roar of hideous laughter, which resounded through the hills more like the growl of a wild beast than any human utterance of satisfaction.

"Poison, my dears, poison, is not the merchandise which these modest little ones buy from us; but lace, and trinkets, and a pair of earrings, or, mayhap, a set of gilded buttons for their sweethearts. But there are she-cats that I could name in pleasant France, and sunny Italy, and tawny-coloured Spain, that if I offer them gems or golden finery, will smirk, and smile, and pout, and ask me in an undertone—'Not these, good friend, but *poison*—poison is the ware I want; and so I sell them poisons to their hearts' and liver's content. And if in days or weeks some faithless lover perishes, or some too watchful father kicks the bucket, or some confiding husband is born out feet foremost to his ancestral grave, followed by a weeping spouse, who holds an onion to her eyes—why what is that to you or me, my brothers? We do but trade; we are not reverend confessors. Ah! I could many a tale unfold, of rich and poor, great and mean; but

silent, sure, discreet am I; faithful to his trust and all his goodly customers is Dom Balthazar; faithful also to his foes, for them he follows to the death."

"But ho! Jacomo, ho! let me have that rabbit, and hark ye, bring forth that jar of red wine, which well I know is in the innermost corner of thy tent, for thirsty am I, my brother, after many a weary mile of broiling sun, of travel and adventure." And as the huge jar was brought forth—for his commands seemed to meet with ready obedience—he lifted it to his lips, and took a hearty draught, swallowing methought a whole quart in a single gulp. Then attacking the rabbit, it began to disappear in that capacious cavern which had already engorged the greater part of a whole hare, and still seemed void enough to contain half a dozen more.

"Well, my brothers, the little girl pleased our fancy, and we thought it a shame that this detested negro should be her sole companion, so we cast lots who should take her from him, and the lot fell on Pedro—thou didst know him once, Jacomo—thou didst know and love him O my brother! but thou shalt never see thy friend again. Pedro—glad was he. He went up to the child, and with his usual gallantry requested her

to leave the negro, and take him for her companion; but the little fool began to cry, and she clung to the negro, and the knave declared—I could have stabbed him for the lie, for was it not a lie, my brothers?—that she was his master's only daughter, and he was under solemn bond and oath to take her safely to a certain convent. At this we all laughed, and we cheered on Pedro, who, nothing loth, seized the girl in his arms. Then the negro—curse on him, my brothers—rose up, and drawing a sharp dagger, which none of us had seen, before the quickest could cry hold! he stabbed our poor friend Pedro to the heart, and instead of a blooming young lass, he had only cold steel. But ho! Jocomo, ho! reach me that pheasant—in truth it seems a fat and comely bird—and give me again of thy red wine, for well the wine and bird agree with one who hath journeyed many a weary mile, and sweltered under the broiling sun of travel and adventure." Thus saying, he helped himself to a whole pheasant, of which he seemed to swallow even the bones, for he crunched them beneath his huge and boar-like tusks, making all the while the most horrible grimaces; and when the pheasant also had disappeared, he again lifted the heavy jar to his lips, and continued drinking until we thought he should burst. Smacking his

lips, he laid down the jar beside him, and then resumed, "Ho! Jacomo, ho!—where was I in my story? Let me see, brother—let me see, I pray thee. Aye, now I remember—Our friend Pedro tumbled dead down one of the precipices, and the negro looked after him and laughed, and horrible it was, the sound of that accursed wretch's laughter. Then came I up to him, and whispered in his ear, 'My friend, thou art a dead man; thou shalt never escape hence with life for this deed, for we are all like sworn brothers, and are bent on thy destruction, wherefore I counsel thee to blood and more blood.' And when the negro heard me, great indeed was his rage. And now, my brothers, hearken with attention. For the negro believing well that what I said was truth, and looking about him, could see no loophole for escape, so he looked imploringly at the young girl, and she at him, and she said, 'O, Domingo, kill me rather,' and we fearing that she would thus escape, advanced like brave and gallant knights of old to her delivery; when just as we were near, this thrice accursed black fiend plunged his dagger into her side; and when he saw that she was indeed dead, he turned upon us and charged as if ten thousand devilkins were in his soul. Greatly did I rejoice, my brothers, when I saw this; but not much did I exult when

I saw my loved companions, who were wholly taken by surprise, and had scarcely time to draw their faithful knives—when I say I saw them fall one by one, by his detested hand; until four more as brave and noble contrabandistas as ever Spain sent forth were food for dogs and birds upon the hill. And now the negro seemed exhausted, when we rushed upon him, and with our knives cut him into five hundred pieces, and we gathered up all the dead, and made a mighty pyre, and burned them there that night; and a finer pyre was never reflected upon the snowy mountains than that which we raised then and there in honour of our slain companions. And now, my brothers, did I not say truly that a fine and gallant sight I saw upon the frontier; a fine and gallant sight for a brave man's eye to witness?"

We were all silent and horror stricken. But Dom Balthazar did not notice our foolishness; but again lifting the jar, he drained another mighty draught, and laid it down exulting in his strength. Then turning to the women, he said, while he fiercely twisted his moustache—

"This tale have I told, my sisters, for men, brave men; but now, O beautiful ones! hearken ye also, for I will expound rare wisdom, and freely give the wealth of long experience. Ye, when ye go out to prey upon the highways and

the byeways, are often at a loss when the sons of devils, who are called Christians, accost and ask their fortunes to be told; and when they tempt ye with the shining metal of the East; but never shall she be at a standstill who hearkens unto my rules; neither shall she falter in an answer to male or female. When married women ask ye for their fate be sure and let the man be far removed; whisper not into their souls until the sneaking cully be out of earshot. Then may ye safely tell them, one and all, old and young, rich and poor, halt and blind, fair and frail, that they have broken their nuptial promise; and with some other favoured one have laughed in secret at the faith they owed to him who stands apart, and thinks himself—O Cuckoo!—the sole and worshipped object of his smiling spouse. And when ye have whispered this into their souls, mark ye well their looks, their eyes, their cheeks. For some will smile assent, as if they knew ye could not be deceived; and some will redden in the face—but these are not quite hardened—and some will, with a quick suspicious movement of the eye, betray the inmost riddle of their hearts. Then shall ye know that ye have power over these, the Christian children of devils; and ye shall demand gold, and it shall be given ye, as the price of secresy. And when their husbands come and ask their

fate assure them that their sainted wives love only them alone, and are more pure than the snows of Ararat.

"Never but once did I meet with an exception to this wise rule and maxim, and she, God wot! was but a poor silly child, who had been brought up in a cottage, and had a kind of religious faith in ancient things, and thought the marriage vow was binding on her conscience. Great was her shame when I told her she had deceived her husband; but she answered me not; only she left me in silent scorn, and I knew that she alone of all the sex was pure, and I went away abashed. But this happened only once, and I suppose she has learned better since; so let us drink her health, my sisters, and greater insight into knowledge.

"And next ye may predict handsome children; for every long-eared silly woman thinks she must produce the most angelic specimens of human nature; wherefore be most lavish in your prophecies of this kind, for they cost ye nothing, and always give delight.

"And next ye may foretell a journey, soon to be undertaken; a letter to be received which will convey pleasant tidings; and a present on the road which will be gladly welcomed. So that if the silly dame shall but go to church on Sunday,

or gets a note containing nothing but 'how are you,' or receives an apple or an orange from some fool as stupid as herself, each and all your prophecies will be fulfilled; and you will be thenceforth regarded as sibyls in sagacity, who may demand gold, and spurn silver if presented.

"But to the single, every foolish speech sounds like heavenly wisdom. The poor birds think only of the young men. Tell them that a hundred youths are going distracted for them; they believe it all and go away in happiness. Predict marriage—marriage with the man they love most—let him be black if the postulant be fair; if she be black her husband must be fair, with blue eyes. Children, happiness, love in abundance, letters breathing fidelity—all this is the trash for them."

All this the wretch delivered in a sing-song voice, which made me loathe him. There seemed such savage cruelty and mocking hate in all he spoke that a strong and fierce antipathy against him burst out of my heart. I felt it like volcanic fire within me. I could not and I would not contain it. We both felt it at the same moment. We looked into each other's eyes. He hated me—he saw that I abhorred him. There was a murderous light in his eye, but he could not well stab me unprovoked. I knew he would seek his oppor-

tunity; but relying on myself and Fate, I scorned him.

"Ho, Jacomo, ho," said he, "who may this gallant be? Methinks I see not often sparks of his quality among the Gitanos. One of us, you would say. Yes, I see it by his well dyed skin, and hands that show the walnut juice. No, Jacomo, no brother, he is not one of our race—he is not of the true Calorè—whatever he may pretend, or however loudly he may claim our royal blood. Black his eyes and dark his hair may be, but he has the juice of devils in him—not the blood of the favourite of the gods. But come, let us drink around. If ye are well content why so am I." And saying this he drained another draught, and leered horribly at some of the younger gypsies. "And well thou knowest, Jacomo," he continued, "that I of all men living know the royal blood. I have seen it bubbling into light—though it was rather black and dirty blood, I own—but was it not of the true royal stock? Fine regal Guelphic blood, which never has been contaminated by grooms or fierce huzzars? Ah! Count Koningsmark, thou art in hell-fire now, and thy bones are rotting beneath the bedchamber of the pretty Sophy of Halle; but thou wert once a roaring blade, only thou didst fly into the fire more heedlessly than

any moth or daddy-long-legs that I ever knew. For when our late royal master, George the First (who is now a black raven if her grace of Kendal can be believed), was away in the wars, and his young wife was at the old Elector's court, she laughed at some of the frowsy queans who shared the favours of that gallant old booby. But it is dangerous playing with such edged tools as court ladies be; they are more cruel than lynxes when their passions are aroused. So they filled the doting old scoundrel with all sorts of tales about his pretty daughter-in-law and the gallant Swede; and he was decoyed one night by a page who came with a pretended message from the princess to meet him in her bed-chamber; but the little simpleton sent no such invitation; and when he got there, instead of a beautiful lady, he found half a dozen grim Hanoverians, who stifled him in five minutes, and thrust his body into a grave ready dug beneath the floor. And when her valiant lord came back from his campaign covered with laurels—I suppose he plucked them from the stone wall behind which he couched, while the shots were flying in the distance—the lynxes got around him and told him all they pleased; so the pretty fool was locked up for life in the Castle of Ahlen, where she lived on bread and water for two-and-thirty years. Two-and-thirty long years

she lingered there, until her heart froze into ice; a sad price for a thoughtless laugh, my brothers; a heavy penalty to pay, my sisters, for the outburst of a young heart. But this is the way of the world. Well, I was a soldier then—on business of Egypt, O my brothers—in the grim old barrack, and was on guard outside her door just before she died. So I was called in, and a purse of gold was put into my pouch, and I saw the dying woman, and she said, 'Gypsy, for I know you to be such, I once served your people, and they gave me this as a token that if ever I should want the aid of one I should show him this medal and I could command it. Now I am in need of a trusty messenger; behold this, and if there is faith in thy people swear that thou wilt obey.' And she showed me the silver medal that thou wottest of, which all our tribe are bound to worship. Then I kissed the medal, and I said: 'Command me, and I will do it with my life;' and she looked at me with a dying look, and I knew that she believed my oath. So she said, 'Take this letter; give it to the King of England.' And she read it thus—

"'*I am dying. In a few hours I shall be before God. But I cite thee, George of Hanover and England, to meet me before the Judgment Throne*

*of Heaven within the year; and if thou convict not me, I will convict thee. Fail not, for it shall be a solemn trial, and may God adjudge the guilty to eternal fire and torture.*

"'SOPHIA DOROTHEA OF HALLE.'

"And I took the letter from her hand and went my way; and she died in five minutes. And right glad was I to have such a message to the adulterous old vagabond. But days and weeks elapsed, and I was detained still on business of Egypt, and I could not go away, nor knew how I could cross the seas. And my oath troubled me, but I knew I must fulfil it, though all the strength of hell should interpose. At length I was free from Ahlen, and I began my journey to England, but suddenly—for I had prayed to ten thousand fiends to aid me—the news was brought that George was on his way to Hanover; so I struck out of my path, and met the royal carriage on the road to Osnaburg, and right glad was I, for now my oath would be fulfilled. And as the heavy coach lumbered along, with guards and dust and noise, and all the clatter that attends these kings, I could see the old villain within, and one of his fat, snuffy mistresses was by his side. So I called aloud to the coachman—Halt! and the coachman was one of

us, and I made the sign, and he halted; and I said—'This letter of importance is for your Majesty.' The king took it and frowned, for he was enraged at the stoppage, and he tore it open. But the moment he read it he grew black in the face and fell back; his eyes and mouth moved strangely; his hands fell down as if lifeless; his tongue hung half a yard out of his mouth. I never saw so pretty a sight before; but I knew now that all was over with him. He died in a few hours; but how he stood the terrible trial above, the best historians of the Kings of England have not announced; though I suppose if he were acquitted we should have certainly heard. And whether he is now a raven, with his former mistress, the duchess in Grosvenor Square, or tumbles in eternal flame and punishment, will never be known until you and I, Jacomo, are cold corpses; and the princess calls me to her presence to thank me for fulfilling her commands."

And now I thought the wretch had done, but I was mistaken, for he suddenly pulled off his cloak, and unbuttoning his jerkin disclosed a shagged black breast; and tearing the lappels aside, he said—

"Ho! Jacomo, my brother, look here—this wound I got in the Morisco land," and he pointed

to a huge scar in which you might have hidden your forefinger. Then he grinned at me and went on. "And thus it happed, my brothers—thus it came to pass my little sisters of Egypt, pure gitanas by the four sides. He and I loved the same one—she was a black Calorè, and she favoured him more than me. So I watched them both one night under an old battlement, and fond indeed were they, the unconscious fools. Then I stood before them and laughed, and I seized her from his arms, but he rushed against me, and with a great Manchegan knife inflicted this wound, and I fell, and they both grappled with me, and I was well nigh death, my brothers; and I thought never again shall I go forth on business of Egypt, and see my brothers of the wood, and my dark eyed sisters of the forest—pure Zincali of the four bloods. But this thought gave me courage rather than despair; and exerting all my strength, I suddenly flung them from me, and wresting the knife out of the villain's hand, I plunged it in his throat, and left the gypsy bright with her betrothed. But this wound my brothers, laid me prostrate for many a long day afterwards.

"But, ho! Jacomo, ho! what, my brother, and hast thou no cheese, no delicate fruits, no sweetmeats after this rough repast? Bring forth

that mighty orb of Cheshire, and give thy half starved brother of the best," and strange to say Jacomo brought it; and the bravo, cutting a slice, crammed it down his throat, grinning, laughing, coughing all the while, until he seemed more like a demon than a human being; and I half expected to see him seize the one who sat next him, and swallow him down body and bones at a single gulp. For this feat, however, he was probably too full, and the adventure seemed only deferred. And now for the sixth time he lifted up the jar, no longer heavy as it had been, but easily wielded, and containing but a small modicum for so accomplished a drinker as this new friend of ours proved to be. He raised it, and in a trice, we saw the bottom upturned to the skies. The whole jar had been drained to the dregs—the mighty stomach was at length appeased. Then tossing it from him with a disdainful oath, the fellow looked again at me, and said, "Thou of the true Calorè! thou, a son of devils. But I will soon ferret thee out; soon will I end this mumming." He shook his fist, he grinned again most horribly; he half rose up as if to strike me—probably he would have done so if he came near; for no one interfered; all seemed awe-stricken; but the effort was too much for the swollen drunkard, and he fell helpless on

the grass, muttering with a horrid voice a verse that I afterwards heard more than once sung in our tents—

Throughout the night, the dusky night,
I prowl in silence round;
And with my eyes look left and right
For him the Spanish hound;
That with my knife I may him smite,
And to the vitals wound.

## CHAPTER XIX.

"O full of all subtlety and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord."

Ah! those were wild days. I recall them now as one recalls the memory of some feverish dream. You are lying in your bed, in the cool vesper hour; the soft evening sunlight gently streams in upon your chamber; the breath of flowers is wafted from the trellis beneath; the sweet chirp of the birds is heard, as they hop among the tree branches that overshadow your bedroom window; you raise yourself up occasionally to catch a glimpse of the azure heaven outside, and you see the silver clouds travel over the blue hills, or the distant sea, orange-coloured in the descending

sunlight. You think how happy they must be who can wander about in that open Paradise, like the birds, or sail over that celestial sea, with sharply cutting keel, and bellying foresail, or mount those happy hills with gay elastic footstep. And you contrast your own pale, weak, nerveless limbs, with those which you assign in fancy to the wanderers outside, and you are unhappy. And after many a hard struggle with these purple thoughts, you sink into an uneasy slumber, and you are a corsair battling with a desperate foe, on an ensanguined ocean; or a general urging on your wild and fire-eyed followers into an opposing camp, and yourself proudly bearing aloft a banner, or a sword, on which victory is seated; or you are a toiling traveller mounting up hill after hill, until you sigh sorely for the glorious summit, which is to reveal to you some splendid glimpse of seas or lands unknown, and to herald in the day which is to crown your name with the splendid diadem of immortality.

Suddenly you are hurled from the midst of all these bright and shining scenes into utter darkness; you are flung into the Tartarus of Hell. Now it is an iceberg bearing down upon you, big and black with fate, and crushing yourself, your galley, and your horror-stricken crew into the

abyss of boiling waters, while ten thousand blue sharks leap upon you, and tear you into as many pieces. Now it is a thunderstorm, a very simoom that, ere you are aware, folds you in its black wings, and in a moment, camp and foeman disappear, and you and yours collapse into baneful death, and all is silence and despair. Now it is a fierce, volcanic fire that shatters the mountain; at your feet a fearful crater yawns; a crater filled with fire and poison, and in an instant you are devoured with all your brilliant hopes, and nothing remains but a swollen corpse upon a barren mound of ashes. O reader, if thou hast felt and experienced these things, know that those dreams of the past are like unto them. And if thou art young, as I once was, be happy while you may, and strive to make the best of that enchanted period; and if thou art old, as I alas! now am, then seek to stifle all remembrance of them, for bitterly will they contrast with that which now thou dost experience. Ah, me! thine eye is dim; thy hand shakes, thy limbs are not the steel-cased limbs they were of yore; thy blood is cold and sluggish, and thy thoughts are dull and dreamless. What remains for thee and me, but Lethe—the oblivion of the dark and silent stream? For memory but enhances present misery. We are like the sleeper,

who dreamed he dwelled in gardens, and waked and found himself on a dung heap, and was unhappy—as how could he be otherwise.

Akiba had taken a strange fancy to me. He was never tired of shewing me new sights, or introducing me into new scenes. One evening as we were parting, he said—

"Zala-Mayna, you must set out with us to-morrow. We are going to Norwood to see Margaret Finch, the Gypsy Queen. Our tribe have business with her." He said no more, but I knew that I should go.

Early in the morning we were all astir; horses were saddled; packs were opened and filled; the dukes, counts, and knights of our encampment equipped themselves in their best attire, and we formed a brilliant cavalcade. We rode hard all that day, and at night slept in a fine plantation, more than midway; the next day saw us in the midst of the Norwood camp, then the largest in England. Great was the joy with which we were received. The Zingari, young and old, gathered round us with a hearty welcome. Their tents were pitched amid the old forest trees; and beautiful was the carpet which the old forest turf spread beneath their feet. Scarlet and blue cloaks flashed around the green, with a picturesque effect, on which a painter's

eye would have lingered with rapture; it was a scene for Salvator Rosa. Had he been alive, he might have left the bandits among whom, it is said, he loved to sojourn, that he might study the wild and beautiful, and pitched his canvass under the auspices of old Mother Finch, who was herself not the least remarkable of her tribe. For she was bent almost double with years;—her age, indeed, was more than a hundred; and with her red cloak and hood, her shining black eyes, and aquiline nose, the deep, shrewd, thoughtful, yet cunning expression of her mouth, such as I have seen in some of the Indian princes, and the incessant pipe which she puffed, under the shadow of a venerable oak tree, she presented all the appearances of the wild and picturesque, sufficient to satisfy the most fastidious artist.

Into the secret conclave which was held, I was not, of course, permitted to enter. Of our tribe, only Akiba, Manasam, and the old gypsy Jacomo, were taken into counsel; the rest seemed bent on enjoyment, and they indulged themselves to the full. And quick and pleasant were the hours. Robin Hood in merry Sherwood was not more free, more independent, or more happy. How delightful were those vagabond days and nights; indolent as sloths we seemed, but the

mere sensation that we lived was in itself a rapture; for we were all in perfect health, and when the stomach is good, and the skin clear, when the blood circulates freely, and the sun shines, what is like existence? I have lived since then in courts and drawing-rooms and palaces, and tasted all that is delicious in the jewelled cups of pomp and pride, but give me one hour of the past when I was a boy, and a gypsy, and for such an hour would I barter a whole year of fine and fashionable vegetation. Young and old, we all seemed to have but one aim and object, and that was happiness. We lay upon the velvet sward, soft and warm in the sunlight, or under the spreading boughs of ancient trees, which might have sheltered the Druids, or the Centurions of the Romans; the younger ones of the male gypsies sang and played for us, while the females danced and chanted like the wild Almas of the Oriental Princes. Here, as among us, but on a larger scale, were seen artizans of all the trades which the Zingari follow; tinkers, horn spoon makers, potters, besom binders, net weavers, hop pickers, horse dealers, coiners (I fear), chain and basket weavers, bird catchers, and the dark eyed archimages, male and female, skilled in palmistry, and in decyphering the mystic tablets of the Future. And here amid

many a wild tradition, I heard first of Hather, the first King, and Calot, the first Queen of the English gypsies; and of the dark, mysterious sovereign Zandahlo, of whose marvels so many of their legends are full.

"A great king was Zandahlo," said one of the elder gypsies to us, as we sat beneath the stars; "there are no such kings now, my brother—no, no; they are all departed—they perished in the flood of waters. For he' was tall as any tree, and his eyes were bright like the star Aldebaran, and his long hairs were like the spreading branches of the cedars of Lebanon; you might shield yourself from sun and tempest beneath his royal shadow. But he is gone, my brother, and with him sank the glory of the Calorè—the true sons of the Gods of Fire. Once upon a time, long, long ago, when the true Calorè were the lords of the earth, and King Zandahlo was the master of the world, and there were no pale faces, or pale eyes among the Children of Fire, then indeed it came to pass that King Zandahlo walked amid his gardens—his gardens that were the wonder of all men. And as King Zandahlo walked amid his gardens, behold he saw two Angels descend from heaven, and they disported themselves in a fountain of crystal waters, and the sun shone upon them, and their white wings flashing more beautifully than

silver in the sparkling waters, dazzled the eye; but their resplendent forms were still more bright and lovely, and King Zandahlo looked and fell in love with these Celestial Ones. And it came to pass, O brother, that King Zandahlo did accost these fair spirits; and the beauty of the King was pleasant to their eyes, and they abided near the fountain, and loved King Zandahlo, and told him certain magical secrets of the flashing spheres of fire, and cloud, and water, such as no man ever knew before, nor was anyone among mankind worthy that he should know them, but King Zandahlo himself. And the mystic measures of the moon, and the magnetic essence of the stars, and the chain of sympathy that runs through all existences, and the *force* of the Monad, the Duad, the Triad, and the Tetractys; all these the heavenly ones revealed to our noble King Zandhalo.

And it came to pass that on a certain night, when all the purple arch was burnished with stars, and the heaven seemed one shining mass of burning fires, as if all the angels were assembling before the Throne of the Unnamed One, King Zandahlo also was in his garden, and he hearkened to mystic secrets of the fair spirits. And he said unto them; 'O, spirits, will ye not uplift me into heaven, that I may see some of these things?'

But the spirits answered, 'Nay, it is forbidden!' And King Zandahlo besought them, and yet again besought them, but they would not. And they strove to comfort him; but King Zandahlo would not be comforted, but still he looked upward into the blue and beaming arch, and he entreated them, 'O, spirits, will ye not uplift me unto heaven, that I may see some of these things?' And the spirits wept, but they would not; so King Zandahlo rose up in rage, and he cried out; 'Begone, deceitful spirits! begone! nor trouble ye me any longer. Behold ye are of the tribe of the faithless ones.' And the spirits wept; but they left King Zandahlo, though they often looked back upon him as they faded away. And it was deep night, and King Zandahlo was alone, and he was sore grieved in his spirit, and he had repented him of what he had done; and he called unto the spirits to comfort him, but they came not. And it was now dark midnight, and he still lingered by the fountain, and was unhappy. And he heard a voice, saying, 'O, King, why art thou unhappy?' And King Zandahlo turned him towards the place from which the voice came, and behold he saw a Spirit shining also like the fair spirits in outer semblance; but he marked not the dark drao in his deep eyes, nor the snake that was hidden in his tongue. Neither did he note

that the voice of this Spirit was sharp, harsh, and hollow—unlike the melodious voices in which the fair spirits spake. So King Zandahlo told the Spirit why he was unhappy, and he said unto him; 'Thou, O Spirit, cans't *thou* uplift me into Heaven that I may see some of these things?' And the Spirit answered, 'This will I do for thee, O King.' And he raised him in his arms, and he bare him aloft into a splendid place—and it seemed a palace of the finest art, and King Zandahlo looked upon the palace, and he said unto his heart, 'Never knew I anything until this day.' And when the Spirit had shewn him the palace, he took him into the gardens of the palace, and pointed out to him the manifold appearances of beauty. And King Zandahlo again said, 'Never knew I anything until this day.' And the Spirit brought him back into his own place and left him. And King Zandahlo was unhappy because he could not own that mighty place and those splendid gardens. And he grew thin and refused food, and was well nigh come unto death. And the Spirit came unto him and said, 'Rise up! be bold and strong, and make thy people build for thee a palace like unto that palace, and gardens like unto those gardens. And King Zandahlo rose up as the Spirit had commanded him, and he sent forth his edicts, and he summoned all his

people, and compelled all his artificers to come in and build a new palace, and new gardens. And when they were completed, and a million men had perished, the sea broke in and swept them all away in one night, and in their mire was King Zandahlo buried. And over the deluge of waters, there was seen a dark Spirit brooding, and the Spirit cried aloud, before all the people, 'This is the reward of folly and discontent. Zandahlo might have been the happiest of men, had he not emulated the Palace of the Gods; and lo where is he?'"

A week thus passed—a pleasant week of free agrestic sports. I might have easily attached myself to one of the franksome young gypsies who were about me, and who put forth many a lure, but my heart was unalterably wedded to Francesca; and I looked upon the glittering bevy of dark-eyed singers and dancers with no more passion than I should have gazed upon a picture by the hand of Rubens. At the end of this period Dom Balthazar appeared, greatly to my disgust and disappointment. I could not imagine what had brought the fellow hither, but he boldly entered the Queen's presence, and whenever he pleased went into her tent as if he were a priviliged person, and indeed he was so without any question. He seemed well known to all the noisy

crowd, and he strutted and swaggered among them like a cock upon a dunghill, just as he had done among our quiet little community in Sussex, being ever the loudest, noisiest, and most gluttonous. Akiba and Manasam did not much associate with him; there was an utter disparity in their tastes and habits; and the years of the elder man made him as indisposed to mingle in such rude revelry, as always followed wherever Dom Balthazar was present, as the silent student habits of Manasam kept him aloof from the bacchanalian roystering in which our new companion delighted to indulge. But Dom Balthazar heeded, or appeared not to heed in the least, the feelings of either. He followed his own course as if no such person existed, and set the whole assembly in a bacchanalian mood. Before he came we were like peaceful foresters, disporting in holiday after some long continued labour; our amusements were simple and rustic; we pleased ourselves with country sports and country sobriety; but Dom Balthazar turned all things topsy turvy. Midnight excursions were made into many a choice preserve; and at the dawn he returned with his wearied followers laden with spoil—hares, rabbits, pheasants, fawns, peacocks, salmon, swans, and even herons. Then the fires were lighted, fresh casks or jars were broached,

and tipsy jollity and feasting followed, worthy of a city banquet, or an election dinner.

Perhaps these revels were more in accordance with the rude nature of the gypsies themselves, than the more staid and sober pleasures in which we had previously sought and found content. At all events I have always observed that men generally will find amusement in simple sports, and unless some incident intervenes to arrest them, will go on to the end as they began. But let some knavish, dissolute scoundrel interpose, and by word or example lead them into other and worse enjoyments; let him propose something desperately foolish, wild, or wicked, and there is such a contagion in vice that it will suddenly seize every one of them, as if by a spell of magic; and they who five minutes since played with all the simple zest of boys will suddenly rage as if impelled by the fiery nature of demons. There is a natural devil-may-care spirit about multitudes which drives them in a moment into the wildest and most unthought of excesses; and I have often felt convinced that no men were more astonished at themselves next morning than those who have figured prominently in history, in outbreaks that have had the greatest influence on times and empires. Thus has it ever been, and thus I suppose it ever will be. A single word applied at

the fitting moment, like a spark of gunpowder, will produce an explosion, with whose echo the world will ring until the annals of the world be no more.

Nor was our little kingdom exempt from this feeling. Dom Balthazar, as I have before hinted, delighted in viciousness for its own sake; his example stirred up others; and as there were many among us who I have no doubt deserved death a hundred times, if such could be inflicted, men and women were now found to boast of exploits, and give revelations of their inner life which they would not have dared to confess a few days before; and which if they had been confessed, would have been heard with a feeling very different from that which now awaited them.

"Ho, ho! Meg Finch," he cried, "ho ho! Meg, my Queen, my beauty, my bright and splendid star of Venus, verily thou hast a goodly crew of men and women; and some I think would take the devil by the horns, nor would my pretty lasses fear to catch him by the tail; but brave and gallant though they be, they equal not in gorgeous devilry the fine Calorè of Granada and its mountains, whom I left some moons ago, and whom I hope speedily to meet again. One fellow have we among us—by heaven he is a trump card, and I would not give his little finger

for the souls or bodies of all the kings, queens, and popes (male or female) in Christendom. Why what think ye he did?—fill ye bumpers to his health, my brothers, and then ye shall hear—fill ye purple bumpers to his welfare, my sisters, and then shall your ears be gladdened by tidings of a brave and gallant man. He was a monk—nay, shrink not—for though in cowl and cassock, and with a shaven pate, a true son of Egypt was he—no truer lives in whom the red blood does roll. And from the hill he came—but my lord abbot knew it not, so he was enrolled a monk; and would, had he lived, been prior and perhaps cardinal, if not Holy Father of the Faithful; but the monks offended him, and as he had the molten, fiery blood of all the true Calorè, he answered roundly, and gave the lazy scoundrels tit for tat. But tit for tat is not in convent laws; so they shut him up in a cell, and exhorted him to patience, and let him fast on dry bread and cold water for three weary months, until my brother was well nigh dead. Well, at the end of that time he vowed repentance, and confessed his sins, and was absolved, and was released; and when the next feast was held, he prayed hard to be allowed to serve the wine to all his kind, good, pardoning brethren. So the holy men consented, and my brother fetched the

wine from the cellars in many a brimming flaggon; and when the morning stars arose in heaven, there were forty monks lying dead beneath the festal table, and the goodly abbot at their head. And the matter was enquired into, and my brother wept indeed in true sorrow for the departure of all his pious comrades; and when the hogshead was examined behold a viper of the most poisonous quality was found in the bottom of the cask, dead and swollen; but how it entered no man ever knew. So my brother was acquitted from all blame; but he soon after joined our sacred band, for he had heard that the Holy Inquisitors liked not much the manner of his acquittal, and were preparing for him a charge of heresy, which would have ravished him from us for ever. So he fled to us, and now he is one of our firmest, fastest friends; and he often laughs when he recounts the story of the forty dead and swollen rats—I mean monks—on the marble pavement of the house of God; and he bids them God speed, and he drains his flaggon to their memory. So now, my brothers, and ye also, my sisters dear, a bumper, a bumper, and yet another flowing bumper to the health of the ex-monk of Cordova.

"My brother went into the wood,
His heart athirst for monkish blood;

**My brother sought a viper's nest—**
**He hid the viper in his breast.**

**He charmed the pretty poisoned elf**
**By secrets known best to himself;**

**He put the viper in the cask,**
**And grinned beneath his pious mask.**

**'Ho, ho,' quoth he, 'these knaves shall find**
**That gypsy skill their eyes shall blind.'**

**They drunk the viper wine, and woke**
**In fire of hell when morning broke."**

Whether there were any internal shudders at this recital I cannot say, I only know there would have been a week before; but Dom Balthazar seemed to magnetize all by his own evil nature. After a pause he continued—

"And now, my brothers, hearken ye unto me, and I will reveal the Ten Commandments of Gypsydom, which whoso followeth he shall grow rich and happy; but he who followeth them not shall be as a church mouse—lean, scraggy, and a coward.

"First—All charity is humbug and pretence. No man would give a farthing to another did he not hope to gain something for himself by it; but the great source of the thing is to be found in the vaingloriousness of men and women who love to appear better than they really are. Wherefore, when thou beggest an alms, always seek it where

two or three are gathered together, for shame or vanity will get thee something.

"Second—It is in vain to ask a charity from a wedded pair, for they know each other too well—the humbug mask is off, and so they will give you nothing; but from a poor man sneaking attendance on a rich one seek it, or from a lover, dangling, like a hungry dog, after his mistress. For these suitors always love to appear other than they really are; and they who would not give thee a maravedi to save thy soul from damnation, will give it that they may get a smile from the patron, or a kiss from the flirting quean.

"Third—If there be any man of good estate in the neighbourhood who hath lost a favourite child, go to him, attired in robes of woe, and tell him—as if thou wert ignorant of his misfortune—that thou hast lost a blind boy or girl, and make the resemblance of thy fancied loss as like to his as possible. Then, with many a sigh and tear, and supplication, cant to the feeling booby, until he melts and well rewards thee for thy pains.

"Fourth—If any tender fool hath a husband sick, accost her as she walks the streets, and say thou prayest hard for his recovery, and add that Heaven hearkeneth to the poor man's prayer; but if the wife be very young and the husband very old, pretend not that thou knowest

of my lord's illness, but say to her—'God grant thee, beauteous lady, a young and bouncing husband.'

"Fifth—But if the husband dies, then let your wife or sister go unto the widowed dame, and, dressed in sable weeds, recount a loss which she herself has first experienced, pretending that a husband has been snatched from her by untimely death, and weeping hard until the rich one sighs in sympathy, and gives thee of her purse, without at all considering whether thy tale be true or not.

"Sixth—But most of all rely on wives or widows with small children; for if thou goest unto these with a pitiful tale of thine own seven starving babes, without food or raiment, or a roof, never yet knew I the one who could resist, or who did not weep in heart over the dismal fate of those helpless ones.

"Seventh—The dandy loves to hear his person praised; the dainty dame to hear her eyes and fair complexion extolled; the strutting mamma is pleased to learn that no one's children equal hers in beauty; the military monkey thinks himself a Charles XII., and 'noble captain' will draw forth his purse, particularly if thou celebratest his bravery in the presence of some woman just as brainless as himself; and so the

priest is glad when thou speakest of his piety; but I hardly counsel thee to beg of such, for they dread to part with even a half-farthing.

"Eighth—If a pretty woman pass thee by and looks dejected, be sure her husband or her lover is unkind, and soap thy tongue accordingly.

"Ninth—The ugliest woman thinks herself a beauty, unless she has a large and broad forehead, and then mayhap she despises outward charms; but in mind she thinks herself a Plato or a Dante, and therefore praise her as thou wilt, she never will be satisfied with the feast.

"Tenth—But this, the tenth commandment, is the crowning one. If ever thou seest a tender husband with a pregnant wife, take with thee one who is blind or halt, and press him with thy prayers for alms. Fear will extort them amply; and thou and thy companion shall exult at having terrified the fool out of gold or silver."

But let me drop this hateful fellow; I cannot bear to think of him. I only lament there should be so many of his odious type on earth.

Another week passed, and we had completed the purpose for which we came. Akiba, Giacomo, and Manasam gave the word, and all was ready for departure. We had a glorious parting feast by moonlight; the stars were also in the heaven, and we needed not lamp or watch fire, for it was

in the delicious month of August, when all is balm and beautifulness.

"My brothers," said Akiba, "I go from among you. Never again shall we meet on earth. My sands of life are nearly run; I and your Queen are the two oldest of the tribes that now exist in England. We cannot hope that we shall look into each other's eyes after this night; but such is the way of human beings. Let me exhort each and all to be true as steel to their native tents and to one another—thus only can they prevail against the common enemy."

"Thou speakest wisely, O Bazecgur," answered one of the most aged and venerable of the Norwood companions. "Hearken unto it, O my brothers; hearken, and be advised."

"Nevertheless," continued Akiba, "though we shall never meet again on earth, there is another land of life where we may all assemble; thither shall the true Calorè, the Sons of Fire, the beloved of the Gods, go, and joyful shall be their union under one tent. For what says Kubeer? Verily his words are pearls of great price. 'The spirit that is in man dieth not; it is a spirit of life and love, it shall exist in another form, and in a different orb.' They who know us not, say that we are infidels as to a future being; that we have neither gods nor demons. But ye, O my brothers,

know better; ye are all persuaded that ye shall not perish like the beasts of the field, but that ye shall survive, and be whatever ye have deserved to be. Be ye, therefore, true and faithful to one another in all right things unto the end. So shall ye prosper and rejoice."

And after this we struck our tents, and departed.

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## CHAPTER XX.

"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his ways? by taking heed thereto according to Thy word. With my whole heart have I sought Thee."

One day as Manasam and myself were out fishing, our conversation turned upon the past, and from those learned stores which he possessed he displayed an amount of vast and varied knowledge, greater than he had ever yet shown me. He was in sooth a man of wonderful accomplishments, and to me it was then matter of surprise to find such a one leading a vagrant life with gypsies; but of such incidents I have since found life is full, and nothing amazes me now. He knew seven or eight languages, which he spoke perfectly; he had read also, and mastered a great

number of books, and he was not destitute of eloquence; he was at all times witty, wise, and moral. He was fond of metaphysical speculation, and infused into my mind the primary seeds of many an odd notion, which I have since made my own, and which have put forth strange blossoms, and still stranger fruit. For age, he was about eight-and-twenty; his appearance was dark, but noble; there was a haughty flash in his eye, which only occasionally shone out, but when it did it told a tale of fiery and romantic passion. I had attached myself to him with so much boyish trust, and he saw that my liking was so genuine and unfeigned, that he reciprocated my regard with the sincerest friendship, and I loved him with more than fraternal fondness. He delighted in softening that fierce pride and unsocial temper which from the first were mine; and humanizing me, not so much by counsel—which seldom succeeds—as by example, which almost always vanquishes.

"Manasam," I said, "how comes it to pass that you live with my brothers of Egypt? You are not of them."

"I scarcely know," he answered, "but the Zingari reject no one, and I feel a vague sort of happiness among them, such as I cannot describe,

but which contents me more than anything i my former life."

"And what may your former life have beer O Manasam?"

"Well, it is not remarkable for any tellir incidents, but if you would like to hear it yc shall. My father was a gentleman of large fo tune in one of the western countries; he h two sons; I am the second. Our home was a ancient mansion that had been in our family f centuries, and we possessed all that heart cou desire. Thus time flowed pleasantly on un my sixteenth year, when I was to be sent Oxford. I had a little cousin, a sweet, innoce girl, whose father and mother dying early, h left her to the guardianship of my father, a she lived with us. As her fortune when s came of age would be considerable, my fath was not disinclined to secure it if he could, he placed her with us, and she was our playma in all youthful pranks. I soon noticed that s was particularly fond of me; and I suppose I l her and others see that I was not insensible it; for one day my father called me into t library and spoke thus.

"'George, you must go to Oxford in a day two. It will not do for you to remain here ma

ing love to Sophy. She is to be your brother's wife, so you had better put away all nonsense out of your head.'

"'But, sir,' I said, 'is it not enough for Will to have the estate? He is my eldest brother, and I don't grumble about that. But why should he have my cousin?'

"'My dear George,' he replied, 'the estate is mortgaged so heavily that unless your cousin's money redeems it, there will be no estate at all, and we must all turn out and seek our fortune as we can.'

"I bowed and was silent. What could I say? I had no doubt it was true, and I supposed all was for the best. That evening I strolled into the old park. It looked beautiful. There was not an ancient mossgrown tree that I did not love as an old friend. 'Yes,' I said, 'I will sacrifice myself; this noble old place shall never pass to strangers if I can help it. But how are Sophy's feelings? Is she also to be sacrificed? Yet will it be a sacrifice? My brother is a finer and bigger fellow than I am. Perhaps she will love him in time, and all will go well.' While I mused in this way I saw her in one of the distant walks. How sweet, how beautiful, how innocent she looked. She was twining some wild flowers about her little straw hat, and singing

merrily all the while. She does not know that I am leaving her, I thought. Alas! she will be sorry when she does. I went to meet her, and as gently as I could told her I was going in a day or two. She struggled hard with her feelings, but she fainted in my arms.

"I went to Oxford and remained there four years. I was then, for the first time since my departure, invited home. My cousin had grown into a beautiful young woman. The moment I saw her I knew that she loved me still. She had been betrothed to my brother during my absence, and I suppose she had not thought very seriously about the matter, or about poor absent George, but when she saw me it was evident that she felt for the first time the ordeal through which she must pass. My father did not notice, or if he did he affected not to do so. However, he took care that we should have no interview, for he stuck close to me all the while I was there, and in a week he sent me on the Grand Tour. My allowance was liberal, but I would rather have stayed at home; this, however, was not to be, so I went. I did all I could to have but one short private meeting with my cousin; but every device failed, and I was obliged to leave without unburthening my soul of its secret passionate

love. For I did indeed love her, with all the intense feeling of a man, and I struggled hard with all my emotions in her presence. My father's grave look, however, awed me, and I departed. 'George,' he said, 'your cousin is dead to you; she is your brother's affianced bride. It would be dishonourable in the extreme, if even by a look you made that faith to waver which now belongs to another. I have brought you up as a gentleman and man of honour. Remember the obligations which these sacred words impose, and be worthy of them.' So I went my way.

"Three years passed, during which I heard only from my father, and he wrote about everything but her of whom I longed most to hear. One day I was at Milan admiring the beauty of that famous capital. I had sauntered from gallery to gallery, from palace to palace, but I could not rest. I was wretched and most unhapppy. I strolled into the open country; then a strange feeling came over me, and I fell into a species of reverie, in which I thought I could see what was actually going on at that instant. Have you ever had this feeling? If not you cannot understand me. I walked along, but I saw nothing of the things before me. I was in England; I was in my father's house. I went into the old parish church; I saw her stand in bridal veil beside the

altar; I heard her utter irrevocable vows. I was in a magnetic stupor, but everything passed vividly, not before my eye indeed, but in my mind within. I felt the holy magic of her presence, yet I knew that seas and lands divided us; I could perceive the divine effluence that seemed to flow from her being into mine; yet I knew that we were separated by thousands of miles. It was not a dream, it was not a vision, it was not a jealous man's ideal torture; but it was the strong conviction of my soul that at that moment her nuptials were being celebrated; that our hearts were one though far apart; that her soul was blended into mine, as mine appeared to be with hers; and that she was probably experiencing the very same sort of sensation herself, and though corporeally present in the church, yet was she spiritually far away in some old Italian haunt with him she loved.

"Yes, the Soul is indeed a Divine thing, and has some wondrous faculties, far apart from and superior to mere earth. For how happened it that it knew all this as vividly as if it saw it take place? Nay, who shall tell me that it saw it not; and that partaking, though distantly, of the omnipresence and infinity of its Heavenly Maker, it cannot, like him, be in many places at the same moment? He would be a bold man who

would deny this before me, who have had in my own life such powerful testimony of its truth. But they who have never experienced such a feeling cannot understand it, and I can scarcely blame them if they are sceptical. I only know that what I say is true, and that I felt it with an abiding sense of its reality that has never left me.

"Three months passed, and still I heard no tidings from England. I was at Naples one night, at the theatre; the play had already begun, and I was rapt in the scene. Suddenly I heard a door open—the door of a distant box, and I heard it close again. By heaven, I said, it is she—my cousin is in the theatre. My heart knew it at once; a magnetic, fiery thrill ran through it. It came from her and entered into me. I dared not look around, for I dreaded to see her with her husband. My heart was swollen and almost burst. At last I could bear it no longer. I turned my eyes from the stage, and cast them backwards towards one of the central boxes. She was there. My brother Will was with her. How beautiful she looked! She outshone the princesses of the land; but not like them was she arrayed in costly pearls. She was dressed simply in a white robe. How I loved to look upon her. Yet the sight made me unhappy. There she was, hopelessly lost to me—the pro-

perty of another; so young, so beautiful, so heavenly good, and lost to me for ever. I retired into the further corner of my box, and contemplated her face. Her eye was restless; she seemed to me not happy. Methought her mind was far away. She looked about in various quarters, eagerly, as if hoping to see some one; but recurred again to the stage, and ever with a disappointed expression. At length I mustered courage to approach her. She was agitated for a moment—she grew deadly pale—but it passed off, and our greetings were cordial. My brother was, as usual, good humoured, and he manifested no jealousy.

"I stayed with them a month. One night as I wandered by that glorious bay, and sent my thoughts aloft among the moon and stars, then shining splendidly in that intensely azure arch, I perceived that I was followed. The figure was muffled. I was not afraid of the stiletto, for I had injured no man; but I thought it well to be on my guard. I stood beside a fallen column, and still gazed aloft, occasionally looking at the distant figure; it came nearer and was at length beside me. The dark hood was then thrown aside; the stars of heaven then shone upon that heavenly face—it was my cousin, my first, my last, my only love on earth—alas! my brother's

wife. Upon no fairer, sweeter face or form did that moon ever shine, since God commanded it to take its place in the firmament, and to give brightness to the sons of men.

"'George,' she said, 'I have followed you here this night, for the first and last time, because I see that you have shunned me since we have met; and I can bear this silence no longer. Why am I your brother's wife? Why have you forgotten me?'

"I groaned aloud, but could not answer.

"'They told me you were married,' she resumed, 'married to an Italian lady; and now I find that I was deceived. Until this falsehood had been urged, I still refused to name a day for my marriage; after that I resisted no longer. Why should I? He alone whom I loved was another's, and I should never again see him. George, can you forgive me?'

"I flung myself at her feet.

"'Oh! spare me,' I cried.

"'Yes, you do forgive me, my cousin; but I can never forgive myself. Your brother—I accuse him not. He is my husband—but only in name. I have tried to love him; but I cannot. My heart is broken in the struggle. Yet a little while and it will beat no more. But while it does, it beats only for you. Tell me—tell me

once, before we part for ever, that you love me still.'

"My tears answered for me—tears of blood from my heart.

"'O Sophy,' I said, 'I love you more than God.' I could say no more.

"'Now,' she said, 'I am content. We part for ever. Kiss me, dear, dearest George; obey my command. Go—and never let us meet again, until we meet in heaven above, and shall be no more separated by deceit.'

"I obeyed her. I was passive as a bird in her hands. I pressed her to my heart beside that silver sea, and then I tore myself away. I never again saw her living, but I have wept for nights over the cold grave at M——, where she sleeps her final sleep. She died in three months, but my brother soon forgot her, and consoled himself with another wealthy bride. I followed her coffin home to England in disguise. I watched it until it was conveyed to earth; then I knew that I was alone and woe-stricken for ever; and I cursed my fate, and lifted up my tongue even against God. I became like Cain, a vagabond and a wanderer. I could not bear a settled home; I shunned the daylight; I loathed to look upon the sun. At night only I roamed abroad and fed my soul on melancholy meditation. In the course of these

midnight rambles I found myself in a gypsy encampment in a distant county. I had money in abundance, for our fortunes were now secured, and my father atoned to me as far as he could for the one great wrong by giving me an ample income. I shared it with these wild people, and became one of themselves. I concealed my name, and was adopted into their community, receiving the surname which I now bear. From them, after a stay of two or three years, I came among these, attracted hither by Akiba, with whom I had formed an acquaintance among my first gypsy friends; but who left them for some reason, and persuaded me to accompany him. Since then we have lived like brothers, and in his company I have forgotten or have striven to forget the Past. He has taught me many things—more indeed than all the books I ever read have taught; and I believe his friendship for me is sincere. That we both regard you, I need not say, and since you have made us acquainted with your story, our regard has increased. But you must not abide with us much longer. It is a species of deception. You must not do it. Besides, you are but beginning life, and you have fair prospects. I, on the contrary, am an old, and broken-hearted man. When you have been tried like me, then you may seclude yourself for ever

from the busy world—but not till then. Meanwhile, rely implicitly on us, and prepare to remove Francesca, for in this place is no longer a safe abiding for her. This is the counsel of your friend, who, when he loses you, will lose a part of himself; but who would not be your friend if he counselled otherwise."

I strove to dissuade Manasam from this view of my affairs, but in vain. He and the Indian it seemed had talked them over, and they had both decided that I must depart soon. Money, as much as I required, was to be at my disposal, and everything that friendly wisdom could suggest was prepared for my departure—but as to the departure itself they were inflexible. I was scarcely pleased with this symbol of their friendship; but where I could not win, I had learned not to murmur, and I hoped to gain time, and trusted to the chapter of accidents.

## CHAPTER XXI.

"Then entered Satan into Judas, surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the Twelve, and he went his way, and communed with the Chief Priests and Captains how he might betray Him unto them. And they were glad, and commanded to give him money."

Dom Balthazar had now abided with us nearly three months. During the whole of this period, with the exception, perhaps, of the first week I passed at Norwood, I felt uneasy, restless, agitated by a dim uncertain fear of an impending danger. Wherever I went his eye was upon me. He seemed to watch my every movement. I could have no interview with Francesca, nor was it possible for me to have. Manasam was gone away to a distant part of the country; Akiba was laid up with illness; the journey to Norwood

having proved too much for one of his advanced years. Everything seemed to conspire against me. I knew not what was the matter—yet was I sure that something evil was lowering above my head. Meanwhile Dom Balthazar was swaggering about in his usual style; he did not seek to come into any open collision with me. We both shunned each other as if by mutual consent—yet were both perpetually thrown together and clashing in some odd, unaccountable way, that between friends would have been awkward, but between sworn enemies like us, was particularly disagreeable. There was a mocking sneer about his lip whenever he saw me. But what could I do? He could have crushed me like a bird or a smelt, within his iron grasp—his thews and muscles were like cords of steel, and his resolution was equal to his strength.

He seemed to have no occupation. He lived among the tribe like an independent nobleman. He had plenty of gold, which he exhibited with a careless improvidence; he had but to put his hand in his pocket, and it immediately appeared laden with guineas. These he distributed freely among the Gitanos—as freely indeed, as if his resources were inexhaustible. Yet it was not this lavish profusion so much as some mysterious influence about him, which

seemed to consolidate his power. Despite his roughness, blasphemy, contempt of all things sacred and divine; his mockery of the women, and his assumption that they were all detestable, and the audacious arrogance with which he recounted his own personal admixture among the most degrading and infamous exploits, all of which would have been quite enough to destroy any ordinary adventurer, and certainly tended to make him odious to all the gypsies, there was an indefinable something about him which spoke of force, and the consciousness of an importance among his people which produced its effect upon the mind; and the Queen herself and her chief councillors acknowledged his sway, or at all events, did not disdain to play a subordinate part while he was present. He issued commands and they were obeyed; he advised measures and they were adopted; he prescribed routes and they were followed; he organised expeditions and they were carried out. In a word he seemed suddenly to have usurped the part of a prime minister, nor was his adoption of the character disputed or denied.

All this was particularly odious to me. I knew the frailty of my hold on these people; my tenure in fact depended more on their caprice than on any other basis. I had now lived for two years

with them, during which I had certainly made many friends, but the Calero character is fickle in the extreme; the revolutions of a second overset it from its whole foundation. Indians in descent, they have all the qualities of that mercurial race; easily impressible by the fancy of the moment, they will be ready to die for you to-day, and destroy you to-morrow, just as you happen to appear to their excitable imaginations. I was well aware that I had done nothing for these people in return for the amount of hospitable kindness which they had shewn to me; they had fed and clothed me for a long time; nor did there seem the remotest possibility that I should be ever able to remunerate them. They had sheltered me when I was a houseless wanderer. All fealty was due to me from them. I was conscious of the most ardent desire to prove my gratitude, and display my loyalty; but what availed the gratitude and loyalty of a stripling of seventeen, if either or both were to be balanced against the strength of gold, or the mysterious influence of a man like Dom Balthazar, who evidently had immense resources at his command, had a profound and horrible antipathy to myself, and was by no means likely to falter in gratifying it by any scruples of conscience, or suggestions of fear?

But whence originated this fiery hate which it was now obvious raged in both our hearts? This, O reader! is one of the mysteries of mankind which never have been, and never can be solved, unless by the doctrine of our pre-existence in some former condition of being, before we breathed the air of earth. For how else can that dread hostility which at the first view exists between two men, arise and be explained, except on the supposition that they were deadly foes in some other sphere of existence? I go into a theatre, or drawing-room, whose carpet I have never crossed until this night; I see a man or woman there whom I never saw before to the best of my belief. We look on each other, and vivid hate is seen in the eyes of each; a cold chill creeps over the frame; some nerve within the heart seems to quiver; a nameless weight and oppression, a feeling of disgust, or fear, or antipathy arises between us; each views the other with scorn or with an icy glare that fills one for the moment with a tormenting sensation. This cannot be mere accident; it must be something more than want of harmony; neither does it always arise from a mutual repulsion; I have myself been seized by this feeling against a man who exhibited no similar dislike to myself; I have myself been an object of virulent hatred and

persecution by persons to whom I had no distast at all, whom I was not conscious of havin offended, and whom I really would not injure even though the most favourable opportunity fo doing so were presented to my very hand.

How then can it be rationally explained? I no way except as my Gooroo explained it—w were foes in a former life; we lived and hated and one of us probably became the victim of th other. I know a man at this present moment who stands high in the world, a fine scholar, civil gentleman, and so forth—yet I never b accident find myself in his presence without feel ing satisfied that he once deprived me of life His company becomes odious, hateful, fearful t me; my blood runs cold as ice from brain to heel I have the idea all through of blood, blood, blood of fierce tusks or claws; of something ferocious savage and sanguinary. My flesh creeps; m blood curdles; if I were to be beside that ma for an hour, I should swoon; if I were to be nea him for a month, I should die. This is not mer antipathy, for I have none towards him. I hav laboured hard to divest myself of the feeling; have accosted him in friendly spirit—but all i useless. I never can get over this fixed idea; o fail to associate him with death in my own mind Probably it may be said, he is destined to murde

me; and perhaps this would be a fair answer to my argument, while we both live. I can only remark, however, that at present there seems no possible chance of such a contingency; it seems, in sooth, the most unlikely event that could occur. But whether I have at one time been his victim, or whether he is destined at some future period to destroy me, I never can get rid of the strong and powerful idea that he has revelled in my blood, and drank it hot as it flowed out of my heart. And I believe he has.

This, however, was not precisely the feeling which I entertained towards Dom Balthazar. Towards him there was fierce and burning hatred; but no fear mingled with my sensation. On the contrary, while I detested, I felt myself in spirit at least his master. As boy to man, I was of course no match for him; he could have crushed me at a blow; but as spirit marshalled against spirit, I felt that mine was the superior, and that I either conquered him in some other place, or would eventually do so here. Even in his sternest moods, and when his hard eye was fixed on me with a concentrated glare like that of Medusa, I confronted him with an unquailing gaze, and stared him down; his shaggy lashes were lowered, and his dark glance was arrested,

as if in fear; he could not bear my fixed and lion look. At these periods I could see that he shook all over; but whether with rancour or apprehension, I could not of course guess. But it invariably happened that after a conflict of this kind, he sought to tempt me into open quarrel, by taunts, or hints, or shrugs, or insinuations of my falsehood, cowardice, or treachery. I bore all, however, for it would have been insanity to have entered into a fray with this strong and deadly man, who, if he failed in bodily vigour—a most unlikely chance—would not have scrupled to resort to one of his Spanish arguments with the dagger, and would have deprived me of life with no more scruple than a cat exhibits to an unhappy mouse. And if so taken off, what motive could there be in any one of the tribe to exert themselves to bring a brother to justice for the sake of a wandering stranger like myself?

"Zala-Mayna," said he to me, one day, "why do you linger here among these people? you are not of their blood; you never can be reconciled wholly to their customs. You are young, bold, brave, handsome; why chain yourself down to the career of a vagabond, when you might be a soldier and a hero?"

"Dom Balthazar," I answered, "when I am

sure that you take sufficient interest in my welfare to justify you in questioning me, then I will answer you, but not till then."

His eye quailed; his lip quivered; his liver grew white within him. But he affected then to be in a most companionable mood.

"Nay," said he, "I know not why you should repel me, or why you should suspect that any but a friendly feeling has prompted my question. You are young. I am a man who has travelled much, observed much, and suffered much. I have traversed nearly the whole habitable earth, and can put you in the way of great adventure. I see that this is your desire; more than that, it is your destiny; you cannot avoid; you *must* fulfil it. Why, then, should you spurn a man who could put you in the way of achieving that very end for which Fate has marked you?"

"And what may that be, most excellent Dom Balthazar? Stabbing negroes in the Pyrenees? Keeping guard at Ahlen? carrying messages to devil-kings? selling poisons to unfaithful wives? None of these will suit me."

"No," he said, "not these, nor such as these. In the vast deserts of Arabia there are tribes who make the bravest to be their king. Follow me, and I will lead you to them; with your knowledge and your right arm, you may be a second

Ahmed, at the head of a new faith, and extending your conquering banner from Stamboul to Rome or London. Again, there are princes in India who require the arts, the sciences, the skill of Europe, and will repay their owner with kingdoms and with peoples. All these are yours, or may be yours—what hinders Zala-Mayna from wearing the crown of Aureng Zebe, or following in the triumphant path of Tamerlane, or Chengiz ?"

"I answer your question by putting another—what hinders *you* from doing all these fine things, which you kindly reserve for me ?"

"Many obstacles interpose—the first and greatest is my age. I am no longer young like you. I am fifty—what man of fifty could achieve what I have marked out unless he had passed his youth in laying the foundation for it? Again, I am not learned as you are; and it is now too late for me to go to school. Finally, I am no longer ambitious. I have gained all I need; and my years require repose. But you have a future before you. All mine is in the Past."

"Nevertheless, Dom Balthazar, I am content, and will not seek my fortune in the way you point out. My fortune is with—"

I was about to add, "Francesca," but I stopped myself in time. I had never breathed her name to this villain. It would have been a sacrilege.

"Ah," said he, "I know what you would say —but you are wrong, you will fail. Poor youth— you are, indeed, infatuated." And he left me with a scornful sneer, more burning than Alecto's torch unto my heart.

Oh! how I wished for wings to bear her off from this hateful bully's presence; from his machinations against both; for now I felt convinced that he was devising evil; and how I longed to possess some magic art whereby I could dive into his heart, detect his secret, whatever it was, and meet him with his own artifices. Lose her! lose my Francesca! the very thought was death. But how secure her? I was alone helpless, a boy, a beggar, living almost on the alms of the Gitanos. I was in the centre of a tribe with fierce passions, watched, probably, by a hundred eyes, each quick and keen as that of a serpent; for now it flashed on my mind like lightning that of late wherever I had been, I always saw a gypsy boy or girl loitering near; sometimes peering into the grass, sometimes rifling the bushes, sometimes lingering about the hedges, as if in search of birds' nests. I had not noticed it before, but now it ran through my whole being like an illuminating flood.

"Yes," I cried, "doubtless there is truth in the man's words. Manasam is away; Akiba is

ill, experimented upon, doubtless, by some of Balthazar's potions. Why suffers the old man now for a whole month? Such a thing never happened before. I must watch; I must spy. I must discover what is going on, or I am undone."

I went home to my tent, I flung myself on my bed, dressed as I was, but I could not sleep; I was restless; I turned from side to side; my brain worked incessantly, it went round and round like a revolving water wheel; an uneasy passion convulsed me; in vain I closed my eyes and sought repose; in vain I tried to lull my quick-growing thoughts. I seemed to lie in a bed of torture; sleep was wholly banished from my lids. The hours marched on; all was still; the watch dogs were asleep; I could only hear the neigh of our horses as they communicated at intervals together. Something evil is being devised, I thought; this restlessness is supernatural. Let me explore it. I rose and peeped out of my tent. The night was pitch dark. I could not trace the outline of the Downs as they mingled with the ebon sky, but saw a light penetrating through a chink; I crept softly out on my face and hands in the direction from which the gleam shone. Not a sound was heard save the twitter of a bird occasionally in the thicket. One of our dogs, startled from his sleep, came

near me and smelled at me. I stilled him with my hand; he knew my touch. I bowed him down to the ground, and he moved not; he seemed to understand that I wished to be unobserved; he made no sign, but I could see he watched me with anxious eyes. Over the damp grass I crept still; I could hear my beating heart. My thoughts were wound up to a point, and now I knew the tent from which the light flashed. It was that appropriated to Dom Balthazar. I heard the sounds of conversation. There were evidently more than two within. I glided on and on until I was hidden beneath its side, burning with restless curiosity to learn my fate, for I felt that it was now at stake. Gradually I came nearer and nearer, until I was close to the place. I hid myself at the back of the tent. To look within was, of course, out of the question; but in a moment I knew all the voices. I had no need to learn more. Dom Balthazar was there, the Gypsy Queen, and Giacomo. These constituted the three great powers of our community. Dom Balthazar was speaking when I got near.

"Thus it is," said he, "my brother, this is a Busnè—in our tents is not his home; he must abide there no longer. In a week I shall find out his birth, his place, and why he is among us. The watch which you have just given me will be

a clue to all. The symbol of the eagle is merely the coat of arms of his family; for these gentiles think it fine to say they are descended from birds and beasts. They worship not idols of wood or stone. So they swear, and so, I suppose, they think; but their great ones worship images of this kind more truly than they worship their God; they make them to be their religion, for those are emblems of rank and power, which are their only creed. They would sooner abandon all than relinquish these baubles; sons of devils! yet thus they seek to cheat their grand progenitor. I have said it—he must go."

"But our faith is pledged to him," said Giacomo, "he hath become as one of ourselves. He hath broken our bread, hath learned our language, hath slept in our tents, hath sworn and kept fealty to us."

"What of that? It was not with him ye made a league, but another wholly different, whom ye supposed him to be. He hath come here under a mask. The mask is off, and ye see he is an impostor. What further have ye to do with him?"

"But my heart clings to him nevertheless," says the Gypsy Queen; "he is a good youth, and hath behaved well."

"It will be worth gold to us," answered

Balthazar; "if, as I suppose, his parents are people of condition, they will give a large sum for his recovery."

The eyes of all three sparkled at this. I could not see them, indeed, but my heart instinctively felt it. Place gold before a gypsy, and he is half mad. Mention the accursed thing, and all other considerations vanish. There was silence for some minutes, as if each was ruminating over the luxurious idea which the bare name had called up.

The Gypsy Queen first resumed—

"He is a Busnè, doubtless," she said, "and he hath lived on our people now for two years. Gold will only repay us; besides, his mother will be glad. I suppose she weeps for his loss. She will give gold in many a purse for his recovery."

I could not help smiling bitterly at this, "His mother will be glad." The charming serpent—no, seraph—but both mean the same thing in the Hebrew. *I* knew how glad she would be. She would be glad, no doubt, to send me back to my school torturers; to remove away for ever the living witness of her folly.

"Well," said Giacomo, "there will be gold—but if not, he shall stay. I will depend upon his

faith. Besides, if he goes, what becomes of *her?*"

"Of whom quotha?" asked Balthazar.

"Nay, my brother, thou surely must know this. I speak of Francesca, his betrothed bride."

"But she also is a Busnè. She also must go."

The Gypsy Queen started; she was evidently excited by the threat. The little girl had twined herself around that rugged heart.

"Francesca must not go," she said.

"She shall," simply answered Dom Balthazar. There was a tone of decision about this short speech which cut through my heart. I suppose it had its effect also on both his companions; for neither contradicted Balthazar.

"She cannot get her living like the true Calorè," he said; "she cannot be a burden to us, and to our children. We eat not the bread of idleness—why should she?—the daughter of a Busnè—of a Gentile—of a dog? Besides, she also is worth gold."

"What mean you, Dom Balthazar?" said both.

Their eager curiosity affrighted me. It was an evil omen.

"There are ten hundred pieces of red gold for him that will deliver her over to a man who wants her. He is not safe while she is free. He will do her no harm—only send her to Spain to be a nun, I think. Will the Calorè say unto the man of ten hundred pieces, 'Begone—we want thee not. We are rich.'"

"But who is this man?" asked Giacomo.

"He is her uncle," answered Dom Balthazar. "I know him; he sent me here. The gold is ready when the girl is his."

A long and dreadful pause followed. My fate was now in the balance. I felt like a criminal who awaits the verdict that is to set him free once again in the bright open air, or to send him to the gallows with bolt and gyve. I could count the pulses of my heart. I could number the throbbings of my temples; it seemed an age. At length Giacomo spoke.

"Well," said he, "Dom Balthazar, with you be it. Bring the purses; the Busnè girl may go. I suppose the boy will soon follow her. Farewell," and they rose as if to separate. I retreated rapidly. I got into my tent. I flung myself on my bed. Suddenly I heard a noise—a footstep, as if one entered. I closed my eyes; I breathed heavily. The person stooped—listened; he brought his horrid eyes near mine. I

knew by instinct it was *he*—the accursed fiend Balthazar. But I moved not. The thought occurred, "Is he going to murder me in my sleep?" Well—I must risk it. I did not move. He muttered, "It is right," and stole away.

The next day, Dom Balthazar departed. I knew where he was gone—to London to make enquiries. I went into the town and bought a map of the roads. No time was to be lost; every nerve and muscle I had was braced up for the occasion of this great crisis. I knew that if I faltered now I was undone. If I were separated from Francesca, or she from me, what was to become of her? She would be handed over to the uncle;—what guarantee was there that he would not destroy her? He had already killed her parents. Why should he spare the child? I did not believe one word of the convent in Spain, or the tale that she was to be made a nun. How was he more safe with her among the priests than with the gypsies? The priests were the Soldiers of the Vatican. Here was the heiress of a great estate, and an ancient peerage in their hands. What might they not accomplish if they restored her to both? First of all, her own devotion to their cause,—her wealth, her name, her influence, her family connections, no doubt powerful. This would be a great deal. Secondly,

and this would, perhaps, weigh more with them, the renown through Europe of having done a transcendent piece of justice. This story, therefore, was evidently nonsense. It could impose but on fools. Only her death could make *him* secure—and who could doubt that any scruple of conscience would interfere to stay him?

I bought my map, and carefully studied it. I made myself a thorough master of the roads to London. Upon this point, therefore, I was satisfied. But how communicate with Francesca? She was securely guarded; all intercourse between us seemed prohibited. Nothing, it is true, had been either said or done, which could be considered a denial of access. Nevertheless, there seemed a moral chain about us both which we could not break. She was, in fact watched, no doubt as vigilantly as I myself was watched. Well, I said, I shall outwatch the watcher. She must be saved, or I will perish. I knew she had unbounded faith in me. I knew that with one word she would follow me all over the earth. No persuasion, no tedious argument would be needed could I only once approach her. But she lay in the tent of the Queen gypsy, and that was always carefully guarded. Here she was confined night and day. What was to be done? Time pressed. Balthazar would return. All hope would then

be ended. I should probably be seized, gagged, and taken away—home, or to a ship, or I knew not whither. I watched, and watched, and still I watched, but no communication could I make. I could not send her the slightest token from my hand.

Five nights thus passed. My agony during all this time I never shall forget. I dreaded the lapse of every hour lest it should bring back Dom Balthazar. The sixth sunset came, and with it departed nearly all my hopes. "To-night," I said, "or never." I had marked out two of the best horses in the encampment. They were strong, docile, and swift. They knew me well. I had often fed them, they had licked my hands, they had come to me for bread, which was never refused. I took care that they should remain idle all the week. This required a little management, but none suspected my design. I procured some clothes, a basket of food, a lantern, and made free with a pair of double-barrelled pistols which were in Manasam's tent. These I loaded. I had a couple of daggers also, and a large horseman's cloak. I got some quick poison, which I wrapped up carefully in some pieces of meat, and with these I proceeded towards the tent of the Gypsy Queen, about midnight. The horses I led gently close by, and tethered them to a bush; the

pack saddles were on their backs. On my arm I bore the horseman's cloak loose, and Manasam's pistols were in my belt. The dogs knew me, they barked not; but had I sought to enter the tent they would have torn me in pieces. I flung them the meat; they swallowed it, and in a few moments lay lifeless. Then I stole into the tent. I knew where Francesca slept. I crept noiselessly to where she slept. I could perceive by her breathing that she was not asleep—she wept. I sighed into her ear, "Francesca, I am here; I am come to save you from ruin—death. Get up quickly, and follow me. There is not a moment to be lost." I think she gave a slight scream, but she knew my voice. A harsh murmur was heard; some one came from another part of the tent. I was suddenly grappled by the throat. Then exerting all my strength I flung off the Gypsy Queen, for it was she, and cried out, "Quick, quick, Francesca, or we are undone. With me life and love—with them your uncle and death." I flung the cloak round her, she clung to me. A terrific scream was heard. It was from the Gypsy Queen. "Treason," she cried, "treason! Rescue 'ere it be too late." She pulled a large bell, which was at the entrance of her tent, and which I had never seen before. The sound rang through my ears like a death

knell. From all sides a confused murmur was heard. I heard loud and threatening voices—tones that gurgled blood. Again she grappled me; again I flung her off, and again she screamed. "Treason, treason; Zala-Mayna murders me." The shouts of the people increased, they were all but on me. I bore Francesca, who had fainted, in my arms away into the open air; the cold air revived her. I placed her on one of the horses, and mounted the other myself. All this happened in one minute—quicker far than I have described it. The gypsies surrounded us—they were half naked and variously armed. Luckily the darkness was in my favour. None of them had brought a light; the hurry and confusion suspended their faculties. I struck the horses fiercely; they leaped and trampled down the crowd. A terrible howl arose—a shout of pain, anger, madness, and revenge. Suddenly three or four of the gypsies mounted horses and began to pursue us. Away along the high road we sped, the stars glittered on the sleeping ocean; all seemed peace and beauty; but the holy silence of the night was broken by curses and terrible threats. We soon out-distanced our pursuers, but we heard their following footsteps for a long time. We slackened our pace. A solitary horseman rode leisurely towards us. He seemed a

spectre. My heart felt a foreboding; I drew forth a pistol, for never did I disregard that silent monitor, which is a divine voice within us. As he came near, the moon came from behind a cloud, and disclosed the dark hellish features of Dom Balthazar. We both saw each other at the same instant of time. He turned white with rage and astonishment. He put his hand into his breast as if feeling for a weapon, and drew forth a dagger. He leaped his horse upon me; but I avoided him. As I passed he aimed at my breast, but missed his stroke. He then turned to Francesca; she was close behind me. He interposed. I called out to her "Jump!" She struck her horse a quick blow, and he also passed the steed of Dom Balthazar. I could see the devil quiver in his face. He was a picture of all the hate of hell concentrated into one small compass. We passed on rapidly, but were pursued rapidly. He rode a powerful steed, and soon began to gain upon us. Francesca trembled; I almost despaired of escape. His horse snorted on our shoulders. Suddenly I whirled round. I could have shot him dead that moment, but I knew it was needless. I will not shed blood, I thought, now; if I kill him I shall be pursued as a murderer and taken. What will then become of Francesca? This reasoning seems the result of cool and pro-

found calculation. But it was the instinc
wisdom of the instant. It was the though
less than half a second. As he was close u
me, evidently wondering why I had ceased
gallop, I fired and his horse fell dead. The bu
had entered his brain. Dom Balthazar tum
heavily to the ground. I heard him groan.
rode on all night, and the next were in Lond

## CHAPTER XXII.

"Behold as wild asses in the desert, go they forth to their work, rising betimes for a prey; the wilderness yieldeth food for them, and for their children. * * * * And as for thee, thou shalt be as one of the fools in Israel."

O LONDON, thou vast and terrible desert, how shall I describe thee?—to the duke rolling in wealth a Paradise—to the pauper empty of purse, a wilderness more blank than El Sahara. Here the extremes of riches and poverty meet; here they jostle every moment. In one room I see gold flung about like ditch water; that young spendthrift has just succeeded to the accumulation of fifty years of fraud and meanness, and depravity. He has surrounded himself with every incentive to vice; loose women, jockeys, prize

fighters, tailors and decorators. He drinks up the most expensive wines; he feeds only on the most costly dishes. Yet is he at heart one of the dirtiest and most despicable fellows that poisons the atmosphere he breathes. His soul is as small as that of a toad; his heart as base and sneaking as that of a polecat. Fortune seems to have filled his pockets with her favours, as if in derision of those who think gold the chief blessing of mortals. He can scarcely write his name; he is almost unable to read the most ordinary volume; he is deplorably ignorant of all things, but that gold is power, and that money is luxury. He knows only the vilest wretches—for no others will contaminate themselves by contact with a fellow who has no recommendation but his estate—and seeing in them habitual baseness and subserviency, he thinks all mankind are of the same mould; and he disbelieves in virtue, because he has never observed it in his own select society. If you read his mind, you will be amazed to find it all a blank —nor is the page white, as most blank pages are; but it is all dirt and filth, and smuttiness. Yet he spends ten thousand yearly in ordure; and London is the home for him. Could it but last for ever, how glorious would his condition be.

Come now with me into the opposite end of London. Let us climb up this narrow flight of

stairs, which creaks at every step. The smell is dreadful; put thy kerchief to thy nose, and let it be well perfumed, or I shall never get thee to the garret. Let us knock and enter. A miserable pallet is on the floor; a few books are strewed about, there is a dying ember in the fire; the rain and cold outside pierce through these crazy walls of misery. The air is confined; the window must not be opened, or the east wind will penetrate with still greater force, and kill the occupants. Alas! they are already half dead with every privation. These people have known want for years; they are dying of starvation and blood-poisoning, and heart sickness. The man is a scholar, a critic, perhaps a poet filled with the finest spirit of genius. He shone at his university; the greatest triumphs were predicted for him. He came to London, and here he is. He is the miserable drudge of booksellers. He can get no honest employment; he is obliged to take up with the meanest. He is a bookseller's hack. He goes through every phase of wretchedness. Oh! that his father had but apprenticed him to a trade—had made him a shoe-black, or a sweep. His life would have been happier than it is now. He sits late into the night and writes a piece. He passes the whole of the following day in hawking it from shop to shop. In some he

meets with ribaldry, in others savage rudeness, in all contempt. One of those guineas which yonder squire is now flinging in handfuls to Mother H. would make him and his wife happy for a week. But this good luck is denied him. He crawls home at night, miserable, heartbroken, cowardly, scorning himself and life, and praying for the hand of death to release him from life and London. Thank heaven it will soon come, and he shall beg from booksellers no more.

Such were my reflections after two or three months' residence in London, and while I was yet a sort of outcast. I felt their bitterness then, and I recognize their truth still. But let me go back.

When I arrived in London, I rode straight to an old fashioned inn enough—the Tabard, in Southwark. I delivered over my Francesca to the landlady, who behaved with as much kindness as usually belongs to a landlady in an inn; and after seeing our horses stabled, we supped and separated for the night. Our hostess suspected, and half hinted our elopement, and we did not deny it. Of what use could it be to do so? This interested her in our welfare,—all women like to be mixed up in an intrigue. Next day I sold the horses. They were honestly worth ten guineas each, but I got only three guineas for the two.

The landlord introduced me to a very pious dealer, and the very pious dealer was so conscientious that he would not bid for them himself without consulting his foreman; and the foreman thought them such wretched animals, that he advised his master to have nothing to do with them, lest they should die on his hands before the week was over; and I was half persuaded myself that what they said was true, and should have probably given them away as it is said for a song, had not the landlord again good-naturedly pressed the matter on the dealer, and the bargain was at length made, greatly to my satisfaction, and that of my worthy landlord too, whom I treated with a bottle of wine on the occasion. But my landlord's good nature did not end here, for he was so apprehensive that his friend the dealer would lose by the transaction, that he bought the horses back again from him; and I heard him a few days after bargaining with an old farmer, and saw him get thirty golden guineas for the pair that had been sold for three. This little transaction rather opened my eyes to London customs; and I began to think that the gypsies after all, were not the only people who earned a questionable livelihood. Well, I have since seen mankind in all countries and under all characters, and I am not much disposed to alter my opinion.

But methinks I hear someone say, "Master Wortley Montagu, art thou thyself so free from all blame in this transaction? What right hadst thou to sell the horses of the gypsies? Were they not in fact stolen ware? and wert not thou at this very moment liable to be hanged for felony?" I admit I was. I half wish I had been. I should have escaped many sorrows, and shed a novel lustre on our genealogical tree. But I reconciled the theft to my conscience in this way; and that same conscience of ours is a marvellous casuist. No Jesuit was ever more dextrous. In the first place it was essential to my own safety—and this I think high politicians and statesmen always put forth as an unanswerable argument for any departure from the straight line of morals. In the second, I had left a gold watch in the gypsies' hands, which was worth sixty guineas if it was worth sixpence—and this doctrine of *quid pro quo* ought, I think, to satisfy the souls of all who have read "Father Sanchez," and the "Seraphic Thomas Aquinas," on cases of this nature. In the third place, I resolved, the moment I had got any money, to repay the gypsies for their steeds—and this I considered then not only conclusive proof of my perfect honesty, but also have found since that it is an answer sanctioned by the universal practise of

mankind—except indeed in those rascally places, courts of law, where I once saw a very honest gentleman sentenced to be hanged, simply for borrowing a diamond ring from a jeweller, which he protested solemnly to both judge and jury he intended to pay for when he could. And I have no doubt he did—only that as the time of payment was to be left to his own honour, it would probably have been deferred longer than convenient. Lastly, I confess I am now sincerely ashamed of the transaction; and though I remitted a large sum of money to Manasam some years after, which was more than ten times the value of the horses, the pistols and all the other pillage with which I had made off, and though the said sum was carefully by him distributed among those to whom it of right belonged, still I am by no means easy about the conveyance, and I am in truth very sorry for it. But let it pass. It is one of those errors in a man's life which we all wish blotted out, and from which I fear few of us are free.

My best course would have been to let the horses loose when they served my turn, and to have starved on—but even then I very much doubt whether their unerring instinct would have conducted them safely home—for there were a good many horse-stealers at that time as well as

myself on the road, and probably they had as little strength of virtue to support them against temptation as the grandson of His Grace the Duke of Kingston. But I did one good act the same week—I married Francesca. According to all rule, I was a fool to do so, for she was entirely in my power. But I think it is, on the whole, better to play the fool than the knave in these matters. My conscience is rather clearer than it would have been had I deceived and cast her off. Faith!—I have often since suspected I was not of noble blood at all; for this proceeding was against all tradition, and all hereditary customs. I never before knew or heard of a duke's descendant playing the ass in that way.

And now arose the grand question, how was I to live? how was I to support a wife? An interrogation of a very practical character, which I doubt not has often startled many. My landlord soon got rid of me; when my three guineas were gone, and he was quite certain that no more remained, he turned us both out of the Tabard, and bid us go to the deuce. But his wife left us half-a-guinea, which gave us courage to face a new lodging. This was modest enough. For half-a-crown a week, I rented an attic, and began to look my prospects in the face. I was a good scholar; better I was convinced than most men

who have an University education. I wrote some nonsense, and to my amazement, got a guinea for it. I frequented the coffee houses, and picked up a chance sort of acquaintance with wits and scribblers, and philosophers; and they put me in the way of employment as a translator at the rate of a guinea, or a guinea and a half for every printed sheet of sixteen pages. This was killing work; but it enabled me to live. I passed under the name of Smith—and a Smith indeed I was, for I was fabricating bread out of my own brains. George Sale was then translating the "Koran," which he published about two years afterwards. What I had learned from my Gooroo, Akiba, was now called into play. I think I gave him some useful information. At all events, he was pleased more than once to tell me so; and out of his scanty earnings as a compiler of the "Universal History," he often gave me a guinea, and subsequently engaged me as a contributor to its pages. He was a well-looking man; and though a lawyer, honest. He often invited myself and Francesca to his house in Surrey Street, where we became acquainted with his wife and family, and I sadly lamented his death, which took place in 1736. Here I met another singular character—George Psalmannazar—the author of the History of Formosa. This was not his real name; but after

the detection of his imposture he was ashame
divulge either it or his native place, lest, as
said, it would bring disgrace upon his mot
He was a short man with a square face, long
of raven colour, and piercing black eyes. I ra
think he was of gypsy blood, and indeed the wh
course of his career would justify me in com
positively to such a conclusion. For his mar
lous adventures as a pretended pilgrim on
way to Rome, to equip himself for which he s
out of a chapel a palmer's robe that hung be
some saint's image; his assumption of the cl
acter of a mendicant Japanese, converted
Christianity, travelling through Europe to acq
knowledge; his curious experience among
Beguines, from whose saintly faces he tears
the mask of pudency; his career as a soldie
which he probably did as many strange
things as Dom Balthazar himself, all struck
as being in such singular accordance with wh
know of the Zingari life, that I entertained l
doubt at that time, and have none now, tha
was of the true Calorè breed. Like them,
knew many languages, and had mingled in al
every order of human life; and I think
silence on his origin, birthplace, and fa
name may be viewed as strongly confirming
notion that he was an offshoot of this stra

people; who give (as I know) more Jesuits, Generals, and Cardinals to the world than would readily be believed.

Sale was a lazy man—as lazy and careless as Steele himself—and though he had undertaken to furnish the booksellers with a dozen sheets a month, he in fact did not supply more than one or two. He was, therefore, forced to have recourse to "understrappers," and of this honourable confraternity I became one. His oriental studies, extending over a great number of years, had made George sceptical about Moses and his cosmogony; he was in fact a Mohamedan in principle, and was persuaded of the divine inspiration of the son of Abd'alla. My tutor, Akiba, had half impregnated myself with notions very nearly alike. A perfect congeniality thus existed between us on certain points; and our publishers were of so liberal a turn that when Sale soon after abandoned the work, and George Psalmannazar was taken in to fill his place, that worthy, who had now become a neophyte of the bishops, began to run so counter to the liberal views of Sale, that one of the partners in the concern, Mr. Provost, sent for him one day in great alarm, and begged it as a favour that "he would not be righteous over much." The reformed Jew, or gypsy, or whatever else he was, however,

convinced the worthy man that it was much more profitable to write up Moses than to write him down; and accordingly an entirely new tone of thought was given to the whole work, and it was framed for parsons rather than for philosophers. But the parsons did not support it as liberally as might have been expected. In fact they were better employed in putting out their Johns for college, and their Jennies for Fox Hall, so that the only person who gained much by the transaction was Psalmannazar, who extended his connection among the orthodox, and filled his pockets and his paunch through his zeal for Moses.

The Reverend Thomas Woolston was another who became known to me at this period, and whose brief career furnished matter of amusement, blended with melancholy. He used to stroll into a poor coffee house where I was accustomed to resort, and fall into conversation with whoever happened to be present, indulging in speculation on the most abstruse subjects, with an utter disregard of time and place. He was a man of great good humour, and extensive learning; but not content with ridiculing Moses and the prophets, he published some desperate pamphlets on the miracles, which he dedicated to those right reverend fathers in God,

the Bishops of London and Lichfield, St. Davids, and St. Asaph, in a strain of cutting sarcasm and fun, which was gall and bitterness to those truly pious men. But this ecclesiastical merriment was by no means to the taste of our saintly prelates. They got up a most dreadful outcry against him, and had the poor fellow tried and convicted before Lord Chief Justice Raymond, a wretched judge, who of course was base enough to side with the popular feeling, and induced a jury to convict poor Woolston. He was condemned to a year's imprisonment, and fined one hundred pounds; which last penalty was intended to operate as a sentence of perpetual jail, for nobody knew better than the judge who imposed it that a million could as easily be raised by poor Woolston as a hundred pounds. The bishops exulted, and the clergy were in raptures. Woolston was sent to the King's Bench prison-house, where he died of the jail fever, and thus relieved the minds of the hierarchy. But I have often reflected with indignation on this outrage against opinion, and I do not envy either the bishops who persecuted, or the inquisition who condemned him. He was a harmless man, with greater wit than judgment; but his death bed was pious, and his last words were: "This is a struggle

which all men must go through, and which I bear not only patiently, but with cheerfulness."

I was also accustomed to meet with Richard Savage, the natural son of Lord Rivers, by the Countess of Macclesfield—now Mrs. Brett, whose singular history is sufficiently known to the world. He had published a Miscellany which he dedicated to my mother in the most absurd and fulsome strain of pangyrick, and on the first occasion when he and Mr. Smith (myself) became acquainted, he entertained me with a satirical account of Lady Mary, whom he abused in all the phrases of Billingsgate, and did not hesitate to pronounce "a brimstone of Tartarus itself." "Oh! how I fooled her," he said; by "Jupiter I duped her out of ten guineas, and though it came from her like her blood, still I had so baited my hook with flattery, that the she-shark was caught." And then he repeated with bitter satire, "Since the country has been honoured with the glory of your wit, as elevated and immortal as your soul, it no longer remains a doubt whether your sex have strength of mind in proportion to their sweetness. There is something in your verses as distinguished as your air. They are as strong as truth, as deep as reason, as clear as innocence, and as smooth as beauty. They contain

a nameless and peculiar mixture of force and grace which is at once so movingly serene, and so majestically lovely, that it is too amiable to appear anywhere but in your eyes, and in your writings. As fortune is not more my enemy than I am the enemy of flattery, I know not how I can forbear this application to your ladyship; because there is scarce a possibility I should say more than I believe, when I am speaking of your Excellence."

"And did you write her all this?" I asked.

"I did more," he said, "Smith, I printed it,—I published it. I let it loose upon the town, and made her the ridicule of all serious people, while she fancied she became a cynosure." And the honest fellow laughed very heartily, in which he was joined by a coterie of wits who heard the conversation.

I was amused by this fellow's hypocrisy and impudence, both blended as curiously as in Orator Henley. When his pockets were empty, and your purse was full, he would praise you to your face with the most abject servility, and when you had rewarded him with a piece, he would abruptly turn away without even saying, "Thank ye," and would go and spend it all in a debauch. Next day he would be as servile as ever, until you had again fee'd him, when he would leave you as un-

ceremoniously as before. He always presumed on his birth, and his misfortunes; and expected you to pay the greatest deference to both. He could be gentlemanlike when he pleased, but he seldom did please, and he was more in his native element when he was coarse and vulgar. In practice, he despised and laughed at all morality, virtue, and honour; but theoretically he was a Socrates or Plato, and he would gurgle forth the finest sentiments of temperance when drunkenness made him even incapable of walking. On the whole, he was a very worthless, lying fellow, and Samuel Johnson has disgraced himself and literature by condescending to be his paneygrist, while he has offered an outrage to decency by glossing over the fellow's vices with an excuse or a palliation, which all similar rascals will not fail to copy, and even defend under so eminent an authority. But Johnson's political pamphleteering proves that he is capable of any baseness, if he can get gold by it.

I saw something, too, of Theophilus Cibber, a son of the old player, and a most abandoned reprobate. He dabbled in literature, but was half his time hunted by bailiffs, and he has been more than once arrested on the stage; for he had some histrionic talent which he might have profitably exercised, but his dissipated habits exhausted

all he got. He married a most lovely woman, a sister of Dr. Arne, and like him, remarkable for musical talent, but though she earned a large sum by her acting, he sold her to a man of fortune named Sloper; and when he subsequently brought an action against him, and laid his damages at five thousand pounds, a jury appreciating his rascality at its proper value, gave him the munificent sum of ten pounds, so that he lost one of the finest women in the world for a few paltry shillings, and while he covered himself with infamy, realised the fable of the fool who cut open his goose, and for golden eggs found only—disappointment. He and Savage were fellows of the same kind, who would have stuck at nothing for money. Cibber was drowned crossing the Irish Channel, and Savage ought to have been hanged, and would have been, only that Justice Page outraged all decency by his charge to the jury on his trial for the murder of Sinclair, and that Savage had a half-sister—Miss Brett—who saved him. Old Mandeville, also the author of the Fable of the Bees, took a sort of liking to me, and often accompanied me home. He described Addison as a "parson in a tye wig," but he was himself a sly old rogue, and though he affected the austerity of a philosopher, I have seen him stealing up Drury Lane at night, after

a tawdry bit of finery and paint in that modes neighbourhood.

London was at this time deluged with periodica publications, for most of which Sale wrote, an he had given me a sort of introduction to th booksellers. There was the *Craftsman*, which wa great against the Whigs; there was the *Londo Journal*, *Fog's Journal*, *Grub Street Journa Weekly Register*, *Universal Spectator*, *Free Briton British Journal*, *Daily Courant*, and *Reed Journal*, the whole, or the greater part, of whic dealt in politics, scandal and lampoonery, fo whose perpetual production there was one of th finest bodies of literary labourers that could b got together. These were principally the country men of that great patriot Bute, and they came t England with equally noble views, and earne money by similar exalted practices. There wa scarcely any kind of prostitution to whic they would not submit, so long as it brough in "the bawbees." Need I mention Swinton an Mitchell, and Campbell, and the notorious Bowe who was alternately a Jesuit, an atheist, a pro testant, a quaker, and a Jesuit again, as it suite his purposes, and who cheated the publishers c the Universal History out of no less than £30( while he pillaged tailors, and plundered land ladies with the most glorious defiance of honesty

There was Stephen Duck, who from a thresher became a poet, and penned the most ridiculous verses, which got him a pension of £30 a year from pious, good Queen Caroline. He supplied some of these journals with poetry, and the stanzas seem to have been written with a flail. There was Eustace Budgell, who began his career under the infamous Lord Wharton (the father of the Duke), and who having amassed a fortune by the most discreditable arts, lost it all in one day by the failure of the South Sea Scheme. He was now libelling Walpole with the most ferocious bitterness, and receiving bribes from the old Duchess of Marlborough for his shocking slanders on the party who had displaced her old traitor of a duke. Oldmixon was on the other side, and was ridiculing the Tories with unflagging bitterness, for which he was subsequently rewarded by a post under government. He wrote the life of Arthur Mainwaring, the first keeper of poor Mrs. Oldfield, and would have penned the life of a hangman if he could have got money by the job. Welsted was also in the employ of Walpole; an indefatigable scribbler of political trash. Ned Ward, who kept a public house in Moorfields, was an imitator of Butler, and a desperate antagonist of the Low Church Whigs, which drew a great number of customers to his house, so

that he derived equal profit from his beer and brains. Defoe—but why go on? I saw and lived with these gentlemen who constituted all the lower empire of letters; Pope and a few others being at the supreme head, and hated and abused in every form of satire by these, the writhing wretched extremity.

One morning Sale sent for me in a hurry. "Smith," said he, "I find I can have little or no employment at which I can profitably put you for some time. This vagabond Psalmannazar and his canting set have undermined, and underbid me. We must therefore see what is to be done with Curll, who is always ready to take on new hands. His pay is not much, but it is certain."

We went and found the bookseller behind his counter in Rose Street, Covent Garden. From all I had heard of him, I was prepared to see in him rather a low sort of rascal, but he was not so. He had light grey eyes, not unpleasing, only that they were enormously large and projecting; he was purblind, and splay-footed, but his manner was smooth, and not without a certain polish. After an introduction, and some common place remarks, Sale mentioned the object of his visit, speaking rather favourably of my pretensions. Curll asked me into a room behind his

shop, and Sale waited for me at the next tavern.

"Mr. Smith," said the bibliopole, abruptly, "do you know Latin?"

I answered "Yes."

"Any other languages?"

"Oh! yes—French, Italian and Greek."

Curll lifted up his hands. "But do you really know them, sir? By Jove, sir."

"Mr. Curll, when I say anything, you may be assured it is true."

"Then, sir, I shall make your fortune, by Jove, sir. You are a lucky man to have come here this day. Zounds, sir, I have a pack of scoundrels in my employ, who pretend that they know all these languages, but when I give them a work to do into English, by Jove, sir, they can do nothing with it until they have got grammars, and lexicons, and dictionaries, and the deuce knows what; and then the critics, sir, by Jove, sir, when the work is published, the critics fasten on it, and in the brutallest manner prove to all the town that the translator scarcely knew the rudiments of the language which he translated."

"That must be an annoyance to you, Mr. Curll."

"An annoyance, sir, by Jove! sir, it drives me

mad—it makes me desperate, sir, I can neither eat, sleep, walk, nor drink, on account of it, by Jove! sir."

"Well, Mr. Curll, what do you propose that I shall do in this dilemma?"

"Why this, sir—this is what I propose, sir. I have at present some half score of these gentlemen at work for me, and what I wish you to do is to revise their translations, so that none of those infernal critics can find a flaw in them, by Jove, sir."

"Nay, Mr. Curll, if you ask me to put out a book in which these gentlemen can't find a flaw, I'm afraid you ask me an impossibility."

"Oh! dear me, I did not mean that, by Jove, sir, I know they will find a flaw in anything, from Homer up to the New Testament, but I mean, sir—by Jove, sir, you know what I mean—a real flaw—a great big boobyish flaw, such as changing horses into asses, and men into women, which some of my writers frequently do, by Jove, sir."

"I can undertake, Mr. Curll, that no such metamorphosis as that shall happen under my supervision."

"Very good, sir, very good, by Jove, sir. You'll do—and the terms, Mr. Smith?"

"Mr. Curll, I must leave these to yourself."

"Well, sir, the trouble will not be great, and there will be a good deal of work. Say half a guinea for every printed sheet of thirty-two pages."

I was obliged to consent, and Curll introduced me to his garret. There I found about fifteen poor devils, hack authors in various styles of raggery and wretchedness, with woe-begone features and unkempt hair, working away silently at their various employments. Most of them were Scotchmen; there was an Irishman or two; the rest were of this country. The pens moved rapidly and audibly over the paper in the learned stillness; they all looked up when we entered; they seemed afraid of Curll like a pack of beaten hounds or school boys.

"Gentlemen," says Curll, "I have brought you Mr. Smith, who is now in my service as general reviser of all Greek, Latin, French, and Italian translations. So you will have to look pretty sharp, I can tell you, and must mind your P's and Q's. I am well assured of his competency and skill, and the next printed half sheet that comes from the printers is to be put into his hands before it is revised."

I could see a shudder among some half dozen of the poorest devils at this intimation, but they dared not murmur; they looked at each other

and at me, saying as plainly as they could "*We'll* soon make this place too hot for you Revise *us* indeed."

"I shall have to deduct a penny for every gros error in each sheet," added Curll, "and that i certainly very little, but I have too long put u with impositions. And now let us see how goe on business."

"Mr. MacAuley, have you finished the 'His tory of Executions?' By Jove, sir, I want it The press is waiting anxiously for it; so are th public."

"Mr. Curll," said MacAuley, "I have hunte through all the lanes and alleys you have directe me to, for some of the last dying speeches, bu could not get them. Besides, I can discove little or nothing authentic about Bill Sykes, Sall Richardson, Poll Murray, and the man who choppe up his wife in Thames Street."

"Authentic! Mr. MacAuley; what the dev— by Jove! sir, you must be mad, or drunk, o damnably silly, sir. Authentic indeed! Why who the hell—who cares, sir, for Authentic? I you can't find 'authentic,' sir, you must inven 'authentic,' sir; or go about your business an starve, sir; and die, sir; and be d——d, sir. D I live to hear one of my writers insult me witl 'authentic?'"

Poor MacAuley shrank into his shell, and Curll passed to another.

"'A Defence of the Measures of the Present Administration.' Ah! Gleig, you are at the patriots again, I see. Hit 'em hard—hard, sir; by Jove! sir; hit 'em with a whip of iron, sir—the infernal knaves, the lousy, dirty scoundrels, who pretend that they only can save the country. This will be a very nice sixpenny volume. And here is sixpence for yourself, Gleig—only hit the patriots right and left, up and down, by Jove, sir."

Gleig took the money very thankfully. He had just published an elaborate apology for adultery, in the biography of a certain great man.

"What's this? 'A Comparison between the Present Ministry and the Turkish Court.' Capital! By Jove, sir, that's a taking title. It will sell, sir, by Jove, sir: it must sell. Let me see, let me see—'When we consider the present abandoned and abominable administration, which, to the disgrace of England, now holds us in thick fetters, we can liken them to nothing so much as that accursed gang of eunuchs and cut throats which recently brought the Sultan of Turkey to an untimely end.' Very fine, sir, by Jove, sir; that will tell—it will sell. Go on in that style, Archie, and you are sure to prosper.

They *are* a set of rogues; they *do* deserve hanging. By Jove, sir, these two pamphlets will be a hit, sir—a hit; for all the Whigs will buy the first, and all the Tories will go mad after the last."

He passed on to another desk, where a raffish, drunken-looking fellow was working. He had a Bible before him, and he was evidently pleased with himself, and his employment. Curll paused and read—

"'Two letters from a Deist to a Friend, concerning Revelations, &c.' Mr. Perfitt, sir—by Jove, sir, how is it these letters are still unfinished? I have had a dozen orders for them for the country; the fops and fine gentlemen, not to mention the Ladies of Quality, are all demanding them."

"Why, faith, sir, I have been living rather free for the last two or three days, and I could not make out some of the Greek of the Emperor Julian, which I wish to quote in the middle of my second Letter."

"D——n the Emperor Julian, sir, whoever he was. What did *he* know about the subject. One of your rascally Hanover Germans, I suppose, who was all for the Pope."

"No, indeed, Julian was a Roman Emperor."

"So much the worse, sir; by Jove, sir, a regular Jacobite and Papist. You mustn't quote

*him*, sir, in defence of the Bible, or anything, sir. It will never do for this Protestant country. Anti-Roman, sir, is what we want, not Roman."

"Sir, I quote him in defence of Deism, and against the Bible. I assure you he didn't believe a word of it."

"Ah! Perfitt, my dear fellow, that alters the case; go on and prosper, but don't live freely again until you have finished. Don't, like a good boy."

"And what are *you* doing, Warren?—'The Parson Hunter,' in two cantos. Very good title—very good title, by Jove, sir. Give it to the parsons—hypocrites, sly foxes, drones, whited sepulchres, hirelings, mammon worshippers, and so on; their belly is their God, and so on. That's your sort, Sam, my boy. Finish it soon, and it will have a run. And you, Butt, what are you at? Why you dirty, shabby Irish brogueanier, have you not finished that 'Letter' yet? What do I pay you for? by Jove, sir. I will send you back to hell, sir. I mean Connaught, sir. I will send you back to your potatoes and salt, sir; and your lice, sir."

And here Curll, to my amazement, began to kick this wretched fellow, at which he whined piteously. Starvation had evidently done its work on him; it had broken even the spirit of

poor Paddy. He received his cuffs very contentedly, and slunk into a corner. But Curll did not escape. From some unknown place, tenanted in all probability by some brother Hibernian, a large leaden ink pot was flung with excellent aim, and hit the bookseller right in the poll. He howled with rage, and quickly turned round, but every hand was busily engaged in writing, and when he groaned out "Oh! hell," there was a general burst of honest indignation from the whole of his literary regiment. Some of them kindly ran to his assistance; others called aloud for the discovery of the sacrilegious wretch who had dared to lift his hand against the person of the master, but the varlet was not to be found. Curll's head began to bleed profusely; some of the gang went for Mrs. Curll, who rushed upstairs in a sad fright, and caterwauled very loudly when she saw her wounded lord. Darting around her fiery looks of rage, she sought (I would to heaven she could have found) the wrathful Irishman; but as there was no possibility of this, she and Curll finally left the room, amid badly suppressed titters, leaving me to shift for myself among my new associates.

This introduction, it must be owned, was not the most favourable in the world. I did all I could to make my revision as easy as possible,

d I have often read over and corrected heaps manuscript, so that but few errors appeared the revise. But I soon found that even by is indulgence I could not satisfy these gentle-en. They were nearly all starving, out-at-ows, and garret or cellar-lodged; yet in their n estimation they were the shining lights of erature and England, without whose blaze the rld would be in darkness. Their conceit was eadful; their envy of each other quite niacal; their scandal and detraction made u quite wretched to hear it. The most awful ds existed among them; the Englishmen de-ised the Irishmen, scorned the Scotchmen, and tested each other; the Irishmen repaid the utual dislike of both with alternate laughter, reatenings, and abuse. The Scotchmen hoarded their bile until a proper opportunity arrived, hen they squirted it indiscriminately upon both hn and Pat, but never against any of the ethren who came from the other side of the veed. Such of them as were not translators, degrees scraped up an intimacy with me, and went on well together; but with those gentle-en over whom I was placed as supervisor, I uld do little or nothing. The Irishmen did the ench and Latin, the Scotchmen stuck to the reek, in which they boasted the most extraor-

dinary proficiency, and a Welshman was great hand at Italian. The blunders which e and all made were most ridiculous, and I cc scarcely blame the critics for their severity. these hacks would not, and could not ackn ledge its fairness. With them, all such critic was scoundrelism—yet when they themsel dabbled in it, they hunted out the very same of defects, and held them and their makers u public mockery. At last the Irishmen rose u wrath; and one of them said to me one day—

"I tell you what, Mr. Smith, your deligh discovering our bulls and blunders is very gr but, by my soul, I never yet knew an Engli man, who if he was born in Ireland, would make as many bulls and blunders as the v worst of us."

## CHAPTER XXIII.

"O generation of vipers, how can ye being evil speak good things?—for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

"WHY don't you join our club?" said Savage, to me one day; "the expense is little, the fun great."

"What club?" I asked. "I never heard you were in a club."

"Why, the Apollo Club, to be sure; the club of all the wits, poets, and scholars."

"You have yourself supplied a reason why I don't join. I belong to neither of these three great communities."

"Pooh, pooh, you'll do very well; I wish we had not many duller dogs than you among us."

I bowed, and gravely thanked him for t
pliment. Savage looked confused.

"No—no," said he, "I didn't mean it
way, drat me. But come and join ;
be good fun for you when you are in the

"Where do you meet? and what are
liminaries?"

"We meet once a month, in a very co
house in Clare Market, the sign of th
Fiddlers. We have a new President ever
and there are no preliminaries but to be
and seconded. When your election foll
pay five shillings, and you take yo
among us, a regular son of Phœbus."

"I fear I shall do discredit to so brigh
nevertheless, if you wish it, I will see w
of divinities you are."

"And if you like us, you can join.
can be fairer, so be ready by next Frida
our monthly meeting will then take p
shall call for you about nine, and we
together. Bring the needful, alias the
your supper, which is eighteen pence; w
order besides in the way of drink or sm
be an extra. But we are generally s
lows. And, by the bye, I was near forg
bring a good oak stick. It *may* be usefu

I rather stared at this last article of

but a club of wits *must* have their eccentricities, and this, no doubt, was one.

The scene of our symposium was a large tavern in Clare Market—the delicacy was tripe; the refreshment in the way of liquor was strong beer. We walked up into a long room, the whole centre of which was occupied by a table spread with plates and glasses; the cloth was coarse, and not very white, but the worthy landlady, I suppose, considered these nice particulars beneath the notice of literary gentlemen, whose thoughts are usually in the clouds of heaven. A large chair was at the head of the table, and here we already found seated Orator Henley, who had appointed himself president for the evening. Amongst the motley crowd was Mr. John Dennis, Aaron Hill, Ward, the author of the London Spy, Archibald Bower, Curll, and one of his poets, Pattison, whom he literally starved to death, and who, indeed, died soon after; these tripe nights, I believe, being the only periods from month to month when he had any food. Morgan, who sought to make all his readers Mohamedans, and who published some funny works on the subject: Concanen, a mad son of Hibernia, and poor Jack Dunton, a broken down bookseller, were there; hunger in their eyes, rag-

gery on their bodies. Came also Charlie Gildon, who lodged at an ale house, in Long Acre, kept by Bessie Cox, the frowsy Chloe of Mat Prior, and whom that silly bard would have married had he not been prevented by death; Amhurst, the Caleb D'Anvers of the Craftsman, Oldmixon, Boyer, Mat Green, of the Custom House, Tibbald, who changed his name into the more sonorous one of Theobald; Dr. Martin and Russell, the joint editors of the *Grub Street Journal*; Will Ayers, who called himself a "Squire," Eustace Bridgel, and Mat Tindal, whose will the first-named afterwards forged, to the great indignation of the rightful heir; and most ridiculous of all, Figg, the prize fighter, brought up the rear, but how or why he got into this literary club, I knew not. We formed altogether a harlequin group of about fifty, many of whom were out at elbows—the great majority evidently at starvation point. At half-past nine, the smoking tripe was produced; by ten it had wholly disappeared, and there were poor devils among us who seemed inclined to swallow even the greasy plates, so ravenous was their appetite, and so unusual the appearance of food. Pints and pots of strong beer, stout October as it was called, were now brought up, with pipes and

tobacco, and Henley having called to Figg to keep order, knocked on the table with a little hammer, ordering silence and attention.

"Gentlemen," cried Henley, "are you all filled?"

"No," shouted a score of voices, "we have drank only a glass or so, and haven't had half as much tripe as we ought."

"I meant your glasses, not yourselves, you sots," retorted the orator. "Fill them, and listen."

This exhortation was joyfully obeyed. After a pause the Orator began.

"I am not going to begin with a text, nor shall I detain you with a long preamble about the Ten Commandments, everyone of which I believe you have broken. I am about to give you the health of the most renowned critic in England, the best tragedian, and the finest political writer—need I name Mr. John Dennis? His father was a decent saddler, which probably accounts for the son's detestation of mules and donkeys (such as I see around), and also accounts for his own Pegasian flights to the highest summit of Parn*asses*. I don't believe there is much in the tale that he was expelled from Caius for attempting to stab a man in the dark—for all poignard blows are generally given in the open

day, as Pope, Addison, and Steele, those Three Impostors, can well testify; but I do very well believe that fine and Spartan trait in Mr. Dennis's character, which runs, I think, as follows. You all know—I mean have heard—of the late Dick Steele. Well, in a magnanimous moment, when the wine was in, and the wit was out, this Irish knight became bail for Mr. Dennis for some fifty pounds. Steele, as may be supposed, was soon after arrested for this sum; our venerable brother was informed of the fact. 'Sdeath!' said he, 'what an ass he was! Why did he not keep out of the way, as I did?' And with this grand philosophical reflection—well worth the whole sum to Steele—he allowed that unreflecting Samaritan to extricate himself from the Philistines as well as he could. Gentlemen, there was a moral grandeur about this which I am sure you will all well appreciate. But Steele's conduct in return I cannot well approve of. For while he affected to forgive our friend for that heroic Stoicism which I have already mentioned, he had the cruelty to cite in the 'Spectator,' as one of the happiest couplets in the English language, that famous stanza, in which Mr. Dennis describes himself and his brother authors. The stanza is as follows—

" ' Thus one fool lolls his tongue out at another,
And shakes his empty noddle at his brother.'

"Mr. Dennis, though proud, and justly, of being the author of these admired verses, was conscious that he had written others very much better; and as he thought it was a very mean piece of envy in Steele to suppress all mention of those, while he so pompously cited the foregoing, he wrote him a letter, breathing hot the noble indignation of his soul; and from that day until the death of Dick, those mighty men continued foes.

"Gentlemen, Mr. Dennis has always been proudly jealous of the high consideration due to men of letters. He was once invited to Lord Halifax's house, whom they call *Mouse* Montagu, because I suppose he ratted from his party, and Bufo, because he was as ugly as a toad, in soul and body. Bufo was playing with a parrot, of which he was extremely fond, it was so like himself, and not paying that marked attention to our venerable Nestor which he was conscious he deserved. 'My lord,' says he, 'as you and your companion are so engaged in admiring each other, I'll wait on you at some other opportunity.' Whereupon, to the honour of literature, he left the scene of insult—a dignified and noble step, which, even if it stood alone, deserves our eternal gratitude. Bufo did not stop him, but laughed, and soon after invited him to supper. The wine

was good, and Mr. Dennis drank it—may I be pardoned, O venerable Sage, for just hinting that thou didst drink a little too much thereof?—and just as he was maintaining that Shakspere was a scoundrel, and Pope 'as stupid and venomous as a hunchbacked toad,' he received rather a blunt contradiction from some vile led-captain of my lord, who did not properly appreciate our Gerenian knight. The blood of Phœbus took fire—our noble brother rushed out of the room, upsetting in his angry flight a whole sideboard of bottles and glasses. Next day Mat Moyle, one of the company, met him. Mr. Dennis told him he remembered all that happened up to a certain point, but after that all was Lethe. 'And how did I get away?' quoth he. 'Why,' says Moyle, 'you went away like the devil, and took one corner of the house with you.'"

Here there was a general roar of laughter. Dennis, I think, did not like the fun, but he sat still till we had drank his health, which Savage did, with "one cheer more." He then rose up. He was now very old, yet he retained all the characteristics of his earliest years. His eye was small and fierce; he had a squab nose, like a prize-fighter's, a mouth of iron, knitted eye-brows, a round chin, and a low, narrow forehead. It was no wonder that such a man should have a temper,

involving him in perpetual squabbles. Pope, who always reminds me of a flea, he stung so sharply, had but a day or two before given to the press that shocking epigram on him which conveys the most malignant poison * to the mind, and the old man had evidently been brooding over it, for there was a volcano of rage and fire suppressed within his angry bosom. He looked as black and malignant as a scorpion. He had eaten little for supper, but had smoked plentifully, and he seemed to have come for solace to the place to be encouraged by some of the younger men, all of whom he knew detested the hunchback of Twickenham. He was also, I have been told, hiding from some creditors, who had set the bailiffs after him, so that he was in the very humour that Henley liked of all others—inflammable as gunpowder or naptha; and the relentless Orator, it must be avowed, had applied a very flaming match indeed to this dangerous firework.

"Sir," said Dennis, "that you are a parson is your protection from my just indignation. I will

* Should Dennis publish you had stabbed your brother,
Lampooned your monarch, or debauched your mother,
Say what revenge on Dennis can be had?
Too dull for laughter, for reply too mad.
On one so poor you cannot take the law,
On one so old, you scorn your sword to draw,
Uneaged then let the harmless monster rage,
Secure in dullness, madness, want, and age.

not sully my sacred hands by thrashing *you;* parsons and women are exempt from the anger of men. You have affected to propose my health, but you really have insulted me. So be it. The moon regards not the yelping of the puppy when he bays at her solemn light. My father was a saddler; that is no disgrace—had he been a parson, whose whole life defamed his reverend calling, it would have been so. You accuse me of attacking Addison—he was a smooth-tongued hypocrite, as most of your cloth are; of censuring Steele—he was an Irish rogue, as poor and drunken as yourself; of vilifying Pope, who resembles you, for as you delight in the butchers of Clare Market, so does he in butchering every man. I suppose you think yourself a scholar, and can judge of his Homer—but you are not a scholar; you are a dunce, a humbug, and ignoramus; wherefore it has been well said of you—

> 'O Orator with brazen-face and lungs,
> Whose jargon's formed of ten unlearned tongues,
> Why standest thou there a whole long hour haranguing,
> When half the time fits better men for hanging?'"

Here there was a general smile, and Henley looked rather sheepish for a moment. Dennis continued—

"Sir, I shall always be proud of having been among the first to expose that scribbling Papist.

When I die, let it be graven on my tomb, 'He defended the Great Prince of Song from the vilest of his imitators.' For I aver, and let none contradict me, that the Homer which Lintot prints, does not talk like Homer at all, but like Pope; and he who translated him, one would swear had a hill in Tipperary for his Parnassus, and a puddle in some bog for his Hippocrene. But if we want further to know what this fellow is, let us take the initial, and final letters of his name, to wit, A. P. E., and this gives you a true idea of the creature. Pope comes from the Latin word Popa, which signifies a little wart, or from Popysma, because he was continually popping out squibs of wit, or rather Popysmata, or Popisius—so that when I think of him—"

Here there was a general coughing; for though the company hated Pope mortally, yet it was evident that Dennis was about to give them a longer diatribe than they quite liked, and the coxcombs were themselves each so anxious to hear his own wit, that they listened with impatience to any of their neighbours.

"Pooh, pooh," says Aaron Hill, "we have had enough, and more than enough of Pope."

> Tuneful Alexis on the Thames fair side,
> The lady's plaything, and the muse's pride.

"But won't you allow me to speak, when I

am attacked?" asked Dennis; and his eyes seemed flames of fire.

"Nobody attacked you," said Boyer, "it was all fun."

"Fun to us, but death to the frogs," groaned Amhurst.

"Do you dare to call me a frog?" thundered out Dennis.

"You're an old fool," bawled Gleig from the bottom of the table.

"Then you ought to be my best friend here," retorted Dennis, "for all fools are kinsmen."

"Cut it short," said Harry Carey, the author of 'Sally in our Alley.' Poor Harry was a son of Saville, Marquis of Halifax—he hanged himself in the end, and left no more good-natured man alive. Why do so many good fellows hang themselves in this best of all possible worlds?

"Aye, Mr Dennis," put in Henley, "cut it short—*do* please; as short as your own temper."

There was no resisting this general outcry, so Dennis was obliged to go on.

"Gentlemen," said he, "you are all in league with that scoundrel in the chair, and he is in league with Pope, and Pope is in league with the Pretender, and the Pretender is in league with the French—and the whole of them against me because I did them more harm than all the Duke

of Marlborough's battles; but this will teach me never again to sit in company with a parson, nor will I die with one either."

"Faith, you can't help that," says an Irishman, "for I've a notion you'll die at Tyburn."

This last sally produced fresh laughter, in the midst of which Dennis resumed his seat, trembling with fury.

"Gentlemen, and brother wits," says Henley, as cool as Socrates himself when his wife threw a dirty pail over him, "it is quite true that I am a parson, but that is more my misfortune than my fault, and I hope it is not enough to exclude me for ever from the company of honourable men, or virtuous women. For this I can say, that though a parson, I am no hypocrite, nor did I ever stab a man in the dark like some that I know. The Bishop indeed has waved his atheistical hand over me, and at that touch generally

*Fugiunt pudor, verumque, fidesque*
*In quorum subeunt locum, fraudes, dolique, insidiæque.*

—but then there are exceptions to every rule; and though the episcopal touch like the money which Caiaphas gave Iscariot generally gives entrance to a whole legion of devils, yet in my case it was not so, for I had been well washed in holy water the day before by our Jesuit friend Archie Bower

here; and he well knows that this potent liquor is impassible by all demons."

Here there was a general shout of laughter, and Dennis looked quite crestfallen. Henley begged his pardon in a way irresistibly ludicrous, and we drank the Orator's health with a gusto rather displeasing to the old critic, who soon rose up, and in a horrible, silent rage, disappeared.

Here I ventured to put in a word.

"Gentlemen," I said, "as you have mentioned Steele, allow me to suggest that his memory is deserving of honour in any literary society—more especially in one like ours, many of whose members have been beholden to him." And I told them, with a little variation, all that had happened between myself and him.

"Aye," says another, "Dick was a fine, good fellow. I was down in Wales when he died; where, as it was said—

> 'From perils of a hundred jails,
> Steele fled to starve and die in Wales.'

He retained his cheerful, happy temper to the last. When he was so far gone that he could not walk, he would be carried out of a summer's evening, when the country lads and lasses were assembled at their rural sports; and I have seen him give one of his few guineas to buy a new gown for the best dancer."

We drank his memory—God bless him. I am now old, and as hard as adamant itself; but I sometimes find the tears in my eyes when I think of Steele. He was as wild as Will-o'-the-Wisp, but he was the only one amid the rascally crew of what is called our Augustan age of poetry, who had any human feeling. To have had even a glimpse of him has helped to humanise me. What a jest it was to make such an honest fellow Master of the Royal Company of Comedians—the greatest company of rogues and demireps I suppose that ever were brought together out of St. James's Palace. But even this funny berth he never could have got had he not by some means got himself to be M.P. for Wendover.

"Another bumper," cried Henley; "another full and flowing bumper; and let me preface it with a story. When I was in Scotland, last year, I found to my amazement that there was nothing but rain, rain, rain. Rain in the hills, rain in the valleys, rain in the lakes, rain in the streets, everywhere perpetual drizzle. The universal cloud and mist reminded me of Aaron Hill's tragedies, or John Oldmixon's operas. At last I said to a fellow, 'My good sir, does it always rain here?'"

"'Oh, dear nay,' answered the fellow, '*it snaws whiles.*' Now I found that it not only 'snawed,' but that it 'blawed,' also—and as I

doubt not that it was in one of those Scotch hurricanes our noble compotator MacAuley was 'blawed' here to us, I beg to propose his health and success, and may his muse be always like his country's showers in perpetual flow from Hel—"

"Bravo," squeaked out Savage.

"Helicon, I should have said, only that you so impertinently interrupted me," said Henley. "Mr. Savage, I fine you a bottle; you should not be too fond of reminding us where you yourself come from."

"A bottle!" says Savage; "and where the deuce do you expect I shall get the money to pay for it? If I were a mountebank like you I could raise pence at will from the butchers, but I have to depend on more unfeeling brutes than they—the booksellers."

"You know the law, Mr. Savage," said Henley, "and you must either pay the fine, or give us an impromptu.'

> 'Flow, Savage, flow, like thine inspirer—beer,
> Though stale not ripe, though thin yet never clear;
> So sweetly mawkish, and so smoothly dull,
> Heady not strong, o'erflowing though not full.'

The Orator repeated these lines with a mock-heroic imitation of Pitt, irresistibly comical, and when he had done, he again bawled out, "Now for the impromptu."

"An impromptu! an impromptu!" cried half-a-dozen, who probably knew from experience of their own pockets, the impossibility of getting a bottle from Savage.

"On what subject?" asked this hopeful scion of Lady M.

"A friend, a friend," said Henley; "then we know you can be severe. Let me see, Pope feeds you now and then—give us a stave about Pope."

"Aye, Pope—Pope," echoed nearly all the company. The bard had made them smart under his hoofs, and they now gathered at his name like a nest of hornets. There was no zest in satire on that subject from Dennis, but Savage had been supported by Pope's bounty, and the thing promised sport.

"Gentlemen," says Savage, with a mock air of sadness, "it is too bad for you to force me to attack my friend and benefactor; but if I must, I must, and here goes." And after musing awhile, the grateful pensioner of Twickenham's imp began as follows:—

"Oft have I, moved with anger, seen
Sad object of envenomed spleen
A painted butterfly unfold
Its spangled wings bedropt with gold,
And basking in a summer's day
The glories of its plumes display,
While issuing from his mazy cell
With rage replete, a spider fell."

"Hear, hear," says Hill; "that's Pope, I'll swear."

> "Indignant views the pretty form,
> And spits upon the painted worm,
> So Pope of spiders kind and make—"

"Hurrah! hurrah!" clamoured half a dozen.

> "A monstrous form, all legs and back,
> Crawls hateful from his hole obscure.
> Nor lovely object can endure,
> But views with envy, pride, and hate,
> The shining honours of the great;
> Till squeezing forth his poisonous steam,
> The subtle still malignant stream,
> Blackens infectious as it flows;
> Heroes and statesmen, belles and beaux,
> He rails and bids the world despise
> Whate'er his ugly soul outvies."

These verses were received with applause. Savage was vain of them as an author, though I think somewhat ashamed of them as a man.

"Are they, indeed, your own?" asked Aaron Hill. "I think I have read them before."

"That is what everybody says of *your* rubbish," answered Savage; "though nobody is mad enough to doubt it is your own."

"By St. Patrick," says one of the Irishmen, "nobody else except himself could write as bad as Hill, even if he was paid for it."

"Aye," says Gleig, "and we know what ɔviticus says:—

> "Says Moses to his brother Aaron,
> Your songs are bad and beyond b earing."

Poor Aaron, who was not at all prepared for is onslaught, remained silent for the rest of the 'ening.

"And yet," says Concanen, "I own I feel ıxious to see his tragedy of Cinna, on which owe has written.

> 'Hill for his precious soul cares not a pin-a,
> For he can now do nothing else but Cin-na.'

"But we have not heard MacAuley's speech," ays Booth, the actor, who by some odd chance ɔund himself amid this troop of ragamuffins.

"Nay," says Mac, "I have no speech to nake, but I should like to say a word or two."

"Hear! hear! hear!" bawled Henley.

"Was any one present t'other night," asked ur Scotchman, "when the Orator was floored ʏ two lads from Oxford?"

"Order! order! chair! silence!" roared Hen-ʏ.

"Tell us—tell us!" bellowed out a dozen ices in reply.

"You know," cries Mac, "that our noble

chairman has covered the metropolis with posters, promising to give an impartial decision on any question that may be discussed before him at his Wednesday night meetings. Well, two lads came before him a night or two ago—I hear their names were Selwyn and Parsons—and argued at great length, one in favour of Henley's ignorance, while the other contended that impudence was his chief characteristic. When the question came to be decided by the chair, I am sorry to say, it was found empty, the universal genius having sneaked off."

"It appears to me," says Morgan, "that these Oxford boys treated our reverend friend as discourteously as Swift did when he waited on him; for they say he offered him the dregs of a bottle of wine, saying that he always kept a poor parson about him to drink up his dregs."

"Bravo! bravo!" cried MacAuley.

A general titter went round the room; the Scotchman had avenged himself, and Henley looked black with fury. Theobald got up.

"Mr. President," said he "allow me to address you."

"About what?" demanded Henley, "haven't you sufficiently exposed yourself?"

"How? why? when? where? explain! order! shame! chair! chair! chair! silence!" Such

was the Babel of sounds that greeted this question of the oratorical parson.

"Why," said Henley, "if Mr. Theobald had had the good sense to remain silent, no one would have known that he was drunk, or guessed that he was a pedant; but he now proposes by a speech to exhibit himself in both characters at once. I hope gentlemen, for the sake of our credit as a club, we shall not permit this folly."

"Henley, you dirty scoundrel of a parson!" began Theobald;—but ere he could say another word, Henley beckoned to Figg and said, "Now."

Figg at once rose, and making towards Theobald, carried him downstairs, and having deposited him in the kennel (I hope), came back as if there was nothing unusual in such a trifle. This summary proceeding silenced some of those who would have been refractory, but who after this were prudent enough to be still.

"Gentlemen wits of high Olympian places," said Henley, "it now devolves on me to propose the health of an illustrious and honoured Poet, whose fate is not so splendid as he deserves, but who will be regarded by all future ages as the Naso, Lucan, perhaps even the Maro of the present. I won't couple his name with that of the judge who tried him, for the two should not

be mentioned on the same *Page;* nor will I allude to his right honourable dame, whose renown will last while *rivers* run into the ocean, or the town of Macclesfield produces *savages.* But this I will say, that of all the bardic tribe that ever flourished, or rather faded in the dusty groves of London, our celebrated composer Richard Savage has the most right to fling all the dirt he can collect upon that tipsy jade Miss Fortune. Well has the poet written:

> 'Of those few fools who with ill stars are curst,
> Sure scribbling fools called Poets, fare the worst;
> For they're a set of fools which Fortune makes,
> And after she has made 'em fools, forsakes.
> With Nature's oafs 'tis quite a different case,
> For Fortune favours all her idiot race;
> In her own nest the cuckoo eggs we find,
> O'er which she broods to hatch the changeling kind;
> No portion for her own she has to spare,
> So much she doats on her adopted care.'

And never has the caprice of that ill-favoured harridan been more clearly developed than in the harlequin career of our vagabond—I mean our wandering friend and brother, who from the moment of his birth down to the present instant, when he can scarcely be said to live at all, has been the flying football for her incessant kicks."

"Hear, hear," shouted half a score of wits, poetasters who envied, or hated Savage; and who had not a tenth of his genius.

"Therefore," continued Henley, "I beg leave to propose Richard Savage and his health, as our next and honoured toast."

We all drank it; indeed we would have drank Satan's health had it been given. The thing served as an excuse for tossing off a pot.

"May he be promoted to the peerage," said one.

"Aye," answered another, "I should like to see him with his hereditary coronet. He will do honour to the House of Lords."

"And I hope he will impeach Page," said Warren.

"And spend his money on literature," added Butt.

"My lords and gentlemen," said Savage, rising gracefully enough, for he was not drunk yet, "I thank you for this high and unexpected honour. Pliny I think it was who said that he could collect gold *ex Enniano stercore*. I also have been equally happy in getting applause from a source as dignified;—I mean our reverend illustrious chairman, and the noble wits by whom he is surrounded. I beg to drink all your good healths," and he sat down.

This horrible sarcasm would probably have produced bloodshed had it been understood; but the great majority of the assembled wits knew

Latin only when it was made plain to them by a dictionary, and the rest were perhaps too drunk or indolent to resent what was a general rather than an individual insult. Henley, of course, knew what his friend intended to convey, but he was for once abashed, and did not retort. After a pause of some minutes he again rose.

"Gentlemen," quoth he, "I hope your glasses are all filled;"—the company immediately replenished.

"I give you," says the Orator, "the health of our great literary patron, Henry Howard, Earl of Suffolk, an illustrious prose and poetical writer, great in Pastoral, greater in Sapphick's, though I very much doubt whether a future age will have the happiness of knowing anything about him."

"How can that be?" says Savage, "when his lordship has nine living muses to inspire him? each as chaste and beautiful as those of Helicon itself."

"Explain, explain," shouted Henley. "I always thought his only muse was 'Bysshe's Art of Poetry.'"

"I called on his lordship last week to, ahem—to—"

"Out with it," says Amhurst, "to solicit a subscription—to beg a guinea."

"To ask him whether in the last *Craftsman*

the mad, the silly, or the stupid element most predominated?" added Savage, apparently pursuing the same train of thought, "when the Earl began to read some of his most impassioned verses. He came to a passage something like this—

> 'But who can paint the splendours of her eyes
> Which fill the Gods of Heaven with surprise,
> And makes Jove's lightning envious as it flies?'

"Here he stopped and said, 'Mr. Savage, I am not like most poets. I do not draw from ideal mistresses, I always have my subject before me;' and ringing for a footman, he said 'Call up Fine Eyes.' A splendid vestal from Drury Lane, Mother Holcombe's, or some such classic neighbourhood, appeared. 'Fine Eyes,' said my lord, 'look full on this gentleman,' and he read some more of this nonsense descriptive of her goggles. Another and another was summoned, as neck, breast or arms came to be portrayed, until I had seen all his Muses from head to foot, and compared the living charms which they presented with those which Lord Suffolk had described."

"And how much did you swindle the fool out of?" asked Bower, when our chorus had subsided.

"I think I should have nailed him for a dedication fee, but that he said you had sent to him a week before from the Fleet, and his last avail-

able funds were expended in releasing you," answered Savage, with fine coolness.

"I vow it would puzzle Satan," retorted Bower, "to find which of you was the greater liar and rascal."

"Order, order, illustrious and noble writers," shouted Henley, "don't let us quarrel over such a dunce as this. I remember seeing one of his plays in manuscript. It was a glorious tragedy, such as Tibbald should write notes on, in which Charles the Second played the chief character. After the battle of Worcester, seeking shelter at the hut of an old woman, the royal fugitive was accosted as follows:—'Why, you black, tawney-faced, lanthorn-jawed, charcoal-browed, wide-mouthed, long-nosed, lath-backed, spindle-shanked ninny'—which it must be owned was an accurate description enough. But that rogue Colley wouldn't play it, and so I think we had, therefore, better proceed to the next toast on my list. Gentlemen, fill—fill, replenish grandly, plentifully and bounteously, until we resemble the happy fly of Rabelais. If there was any one here who knew Latin, I would say—

> *'In cyatho vini pleno cum musca periret*
> *Sic ait Democs, sponte perire velim.'"*

Here a tumult arose among the translators,

who were indignant at this reflection on their classical lore.

"Why, faith, gentlemen," says Henley, "seeing that not one of you knows English, I could scarcely suppose you knew Latin—but fill full. I give you the health of Archibald Bower, Esq., late a Jesuit and lover of the pretty nun of Perugia; though I regret much, for the sake of the cloth, that the scandal was found out. Hip, hip, hurrah!"

"I don't see why you should regret it," says Sparrow, one of our translators, "as the discovery of the amour caused him to come among us, and shine so brightly in the literary world.

'Parnassus has a mighty flower,
Which Phœbus saw and christened Bower.'"

"Aye, faith," says Milwood, another poor hack, "but I think he didn't shine so well in that affair of Lyttleton."

"What affair?" demanded half a dozen voices. Bower got very uneasy, and I think if he had been near Milwood he would have choked him. But the latter knew Bower's temper, and took care to be a good distance away from him, otherwise I am sure he would not have opened his lips.

"Gentlemen," says Bower, hastily, "this story about Lyttleton is a lie."

"What story?" says the Orator, "I didn't hear any yet."

"Caught, caught—fairly caught," roared Savage.

"Why, then," shouted Bower, "you are all a parcel of low-bred rogues if you won't believe me, and I won't disgrace myself any longer by sitting in your company." And he left the room in great dudgeon. We could hear his curses as he rolled down stairs.

"Now then, Milwood," says the Orator.

"Why this Jesuit bragged everywhere that he had written a poem called Blenheim, and as it was a pretty thing he got some applause. The next time he waited on his patron Lyttleton, he said to Bower, 'But, Mr. Bower, is this true what I hear—that you wrote Blenheim?'

"'Yes, indeed, sir,' says the Scotchman, 'I did, and I hope you like it.'

"'And how long did it take you, Mr. Bower, to spin so fine a work?'

"'Oh! sir, I did it all at one sitting.'

"'I should like to see the original manuscript,' said the patron.

"'You certainly shall, sir, and when next I call I will bring it.'

"Lyttleton turned to Pope, who was present, saying, 'What do you think of this. Our friend

here doesn't know that *I* wrote the poem myself.' How Bower got out of the room report saith not; but as he still understraps for Lyttleton, and does his dirty—I mean his political—work, I suppose he has forgiven him."

"Hurrah!" says Henley. "Archie did well to take his leave, though I doubt it would be no easy matter to make his Scotch hide wear a blush. Another bumper, gentlemen; fill full, and drink the conjoined healths of Squire Milwood and Squire Amhurst. I know no man since the days of Teofilo Folingi who knows Latin better than the first; and none since the era of Thersites who can reason like the second. They are indeed *Arcades ambo*—which I have heard translated, though I won't say how.

"'Great weekly writers of seditious news,
Take care your subject artfully to choose;
Write panegyricks strong, or boldly rail,
You cannot miss preferment or a jail.
Wrap up your poison well, nor fear to say
What was a lie last night is truth to-day.
Tell this, sink that, arrive at Ridpath's praise,
Let Abel Roper your ambition raise,
Let pilloried Daniel be the light refined
That girds your path and animates your mind.
To lie fit opportunity observe,
Saving some double meaning in reserve.
But oh! you'll merit everlasting fame
If you can quibble on Sir Robert's name."

And Henley sat down like some mocking devil

of Pandemonium. Poor Milwood, and still poorer Amhurst, who was great only with his pen, were both fairly knocked on the head by these compliments. They could not speak a word, but seemed verily bursting with shame. So we drank to them without calling for a speech.

In this manner Henley proceeded until nearly every member of this gay and brilliant company had smarted under his tongue. I could see rage gathering and growing into boiling heat, and was anxious to escape before matters came to a crisis. The club was now, indeed, more than half-drunk. Henley's eyes twinkled, and he began to get more personal and savage. At last he singled out a Scotchman, who had sat in terrible silence ever since Bower's discomfiture, and was evidently meditating vengeance for the insult to his countryman.

"Now then, you Scotch louse," said the Orator, "give us a song. I'm tired of having to do all this talk."

The "Scotch louse" made no answer, but rising up he rushed at Henley, to my immense intense delight, and hit him between the eyes with all his force. The blow took effect, and knocked him over. Like a Clare market pig he fell.

There was a general uprising, in the midst of which an Irish bard, whose blood was at fever heat, and who had evidently been long panting for a battle, jumped up and exclaimed "Fighting at last—thank God!" whereupon he struck out right and left with a noble disregard of any consideration but the exquisite luxury of inflicting blows. The pommelling now became general. Figg, like a lion aroused, rushed into the conflict; the lights were extinguished; there was a common rush towards the chair—not, I fear, to protect it, but to give vent to their long concealed frenzy and revenge on the unfortunate tenant in possession; sticks rattled, and glasses were smashed—I now knew why Savage had counselled me to bring a cudgel—groans, threats, and curses were intermingled, and I escaped, luckily, with whole bones, getting free just as the night watch entered to convey the ringleaders to the round-house, where, I fear, they fared but badly until next morning.

"Thus the soft gifts of sleep conclude the day,
And stretched on bulks, as usual poets lay;
Why should I sing what bards the nightly muse,
Did slumbering visit, and convey to stews?
Who prouder marched with magistrates in state
To some famed round-house ever open gate?
How Henley lay inspired beside a sink,
And to mere mortals seemed a priest in drink,
While others timely to the neighbouring Fleet
Haunt of the muses, make their safe retreat."

How it really ended I never enquired; and this sickened me for the rest of my days with literary clubs and coteries, which I found to be only hot-beds of falsehood and defamation. Savage did not come near me for some weeks. Even *he* was ashamed of the rapscallions to whom he had introduced me, and when we did meet he made no allusion to the fray.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

"And we entered into the house of Philip the Evangelist."

One day, about a week after this, Curll sent for me. I found him in a small room behind his shop. He took me by the hand as I entered.

"Mr. Smith," he said, "I have had an offer made to me by a noble lord of a sum of money—not very much, by Jove, sir, but still it is money, by Jove, sir."

Here he looked at me very hard, and seeing that I enquired as plainly as I could with my eyes how much it was, he added—

"A hundred pounds, which I propose to divide equally between us. The consideration for which it is to be paid is this: you are aware of the approaching election for the borough of Bilgewater?

Great excitement is kindled on both sides; it is rather a question between two rival houses—for one of the candidates is secretly backed by Pulteney—than between opposite political factions. Money will be spent, by Jove, sir, and votes will be procured, no matter how. The noble individual who has applied to me is determined to win; and he wants me to get him some sharp, shrewd, clever fellow, by Jove, sir, who can compose squibs, ballads, and broadsides, write letters, and, if need be, pen a pamphlet during the squabble. He will also probably have to see after the doubtful electors, and make himself generally useful, by Jove, sir, at the place. I think there is no one of my staff on whom I can so fairly depend as on yourself for these varied qualifications; and now what do you say, by Jove, sir?"

What could I say? I had only five shillings in the world at the time, and but little prospect of an immediate increase. Fifty pounds was like the mines of Potosi.

"Mr. Curll," I replied, "I suppose I must do as you wish. It is a sort of work to which I am new, and I fear I shall play my part but indifferently in it. However, needs must when the devil or a noble lord drives—and so I am at your service."

"I am very glad you see it in so sensible a point of view, by Jove! sir," answered my patron; "you need not be much alarmed, though you are a novice; you will not be alone in the work, but shall have a couple of companions, who are up to all this sort of thing, and will enlighten you fully upon these masonic matters."

"And pray who may these gentlemen be, Mr. Curll?"

"Well, they are rather loose characters, but useful, useful, by Jove! sir, when work turns up. The first we call The Cannibal. His real name is Rooke; but he is so horribly ugly and fierce, that he has acquired this pleasant nickname. He is the secretary of the bribing committee at ——, and will do most of that sort of work which is a little too dirty for his employers. When a deluge of corruption—for I speak frankly to you, Mr. Smith—is to be poured upon some unlucky town, the Cannibal, by Jove! sir, is called into requisition, and as he is an adept, the greatest confidence is reposed in his tricks and schemes. He has done more bribing than any man in England; and there is not an electioneering dodge, device, or fraud, by Jove! sir, in which he is not well skilled. He it was who invented the grand mysteries of 'hocussing,'

'bottling,' 'buying cats,' and 'polling dead men;' and when his friends come in, they will probably make him a judge in one of our plantations, or something else equally dignified, in reward for his invaluable services, by Jove! sir."

Need I say how glad I felt at the approaching happiness of knowing such an illustrious character? Curll continued:

"The other gent we call Shaveley Bill. It is a sort of travelling name, such as the knowing 'uns, by Jove, sir, use at racecourses and prize-fights. He will do the showman's part at the election. He can speak for twenty-four hours by Shrewsbury clock, and there will be nothing in it but words, words, words; but, by Jove! sir, they sound like tinkling brass; when he sees the attention of his audience flagging, he will introduce something broad, fat, and nasty, and make them laugh, by Jove! sir, but whether at his filth, or his folly, he don't much care. This gets votes, and this, by Jove! sir, is his vocation. He can laugh like a horse, and tell lies like an Austrian ambassador; you should have seen him at Coventry last election; he can drink, smoke, and jollify with the greatest blackguards in their own style. He, like the Cannibal, is looking out for a comfortable berth, and he was

last year secretary to a sham committee for an Oxford election, in which a noodle lordling was put up against a statesman, so that he will work indefatigably, by Jove! sir, and he may possibly get you into something good, such as a footman's place, with the prospect of a pension. Indeed, I have no doubt this business will be one of the best introductions into public life that you can possibly have—and after all, my dear Mr. Smith, though literature is a fine thing (here he put his hand upon his nose, and cried 'fudge') nothing pays like politics, by Jove! sir. Brains command their price, to be sure, but then a man's soul is of more worth to a politician; and the ablest head in England, by Jove! sir, tells only for just as much in the House on a division, as the vilest dunce, who having no talent to dispose of, sells his soul to the minister, and gets a bribe, or a baronetcy for his compliance, by Jove! sir."

Little as I had seen of the active world of life, I had beheld enough to convince me, that in this at least, Curll spoke accurately, and I asked myself in disgust and surprise, why in the name of heaven was man formed and the earth framed in this goodly fashion, if nothing else is to be transacted upon it but rascality like this?

The bookseller guessed my thoughts; and grinned at my inexperience.

"Well," he said, "to be sure it *is* a shabby mode of getting on in life, but if the good men, by Jove! sir, won't do it, why the blackguards will; and would it not be bad, Mr. Smith, if all the fine things on earth belonged only to the knaves and vagabonds, by Jove! sir?"

I answered that I certainly thought it would; but I did not add, as I ought, that I would rather do without them myself than become a knave and vagabond for their sake. At twenty, I am afraid, though we surmise these things—poor boys! poor boys!—we have not self-restraint enough to do them; and so we live and live, and end at last by going with the herd after the loaves and fishes, and finishing our career in Hell, which, indeed, is the only place for which we have fitted ourselves, in this mortal career. And I suppose there is the same amount of intrigue, and scheming, and faction, and violence there, to get into a cool corner, as there is on this earth to get into a warm one. Nor can I doubt that the monarch of those regions gets as much adulation from his subjects as Walpole, Bute, or Pitt ever received at St. James's; and all for the same reason, and with the same ob-

ject; and with equal sincerity of heart. There is a fanatic of the name of Swedeberg, or Swedenborg, who has made more voyages to hell than Eneas, and talked more with the devil than Dr. Luther, and he, I think, gives nearly a similar account of the infernal polity; and, as he speaks from experience, we may well believe him. Dante's notions of the place are all evidently founded on delusion. The real truth is, that it is something like this earth, only not quite so wicked.

Curll gave me a note to the Cannibal, whom I found in a fashionable street at the West end of London. He had just before married a farmer's daughter as ugly as a witch, and rotten with the king's evil; but he got five hundred a year settled on himself by the old fool of a father, who would not have given a shilling to save any fellow Christian from starvation; and his wife dying off in six months, the man-eater was now as free and merry as a baboon, and was probably looking out for another stroke of luck of the same nature, being at all times ready to take half a dozen putrid women on his hands, so long as they brought him "de monish." He sat in a room surrounded by looking glasses, and was contemplating with Narcissus-like delight the ugliest countenance that God ever made since

Judas; for his eyes were not fellows, but one squinted upwards towards his eyebrow, while the other glanced askew over his shoulder, as if on the look-out for a bailiff; his face was pitted all over with the small pox, as if Satan had been playing the devils' tattoo upon it when it was first moulded and was yet soft; and he looked exactly like Thersites, whom he resembled also in all mental, moral, and physical qualifications. I presented my note, and as the fellow read it I could not help asking myself what sort of a minister of state must that man be who would appoint such a creature to adjudicate on the liberties or fortunes of others; and yet nothing seemed more likely than that this scoundrel would wake up one fine morning and find himself a judge, and all as a reward for a career of baseness, lying, and subserviency of the meanest and foulest description. The minister would, indeed, say, if asked why he had committed such a crime, "What was I to do? I wanted scavenger's work done, and I could get nobody to do it except a scavenger." But this, though plausible enough, is no valid excuse; for what business have affairs of state with cesspool matters such as this ruffian was engaged about?

"Mr. Smith," said my new acquaintance, in a hoarse, gutteral voice, such as an imp in the

influenza would use, "you have come in good time. I am just going off to Lord Chesterfield, who takes a great interest in this election, and who, indeed, is to be the medium through which the money comes. I scarcely know whether I ought to take you to his lordship, but I will run the risk, and if he don't like it he may go to hell. There must be no d——d humbug between him and me, or you either. He wants us just now, and he must have us—so come along."

We proceeded to Grosvenor Square, where this noble statesman then lived. We found him surrounded by all the appliances of splendid and luxurious wealth. His house was a temple of the arts, while he, the divinity of the temple, was like an Egyptian idol, a monkey, a weasel, or a cat. He was short, with coarse features, and a cadaverous complexion, long-visaged, and long-necked; but from the shoulders to the waist so stunted that he gave you the notion of a grenadier cut down. There was an appearance of self-conceit about him that was very sickening; his eyes showed an immense depth of dissimulation, and his forehead was utterly deficient in any moral quality. It was the head and body of an ouran-outang, but an ouran-outang of great subtlety. I had by this time begun to read the handwriting of nature upon every man, and I knew

what sort of a mammal was now present. Yet this varlet was thought to be the finest gentleman of the time. From this you may judge what its gentlemen were.

"Bully Rooke," said Lord Chesterfield, "I am glad you are come. Who is your friend?"

My companion handed his lordship the note which I had brought from Curll, and that illustrious peer, having read it, turned to me with a knowing look.

"Mr. Smith," he said, "I find you can be trusted. This election must be won, *per fas aut nefas*, as the Romans, our great prototypes, used to say, and which the Septuagint translates 'by hook or by crook,' and I believe if you and Mr. Rooke work cordially we may mark down the place as our own."

I bowed, and said—

"My lord, I will do what I can; I have no doubt all will be right."

The peer stared at me.

"I don't know," he said, "what you mean by 'right;' but, Mr. Smith, I know that this election must be won. Walpole will go wild if that dirty fellow Pulteney gets his man in. The fact is the spread of baseness and rascality is so much enlarged that every barrier is needed to stay the advancing tide, and so long as we can command

a majority in the House of Commons—for we are always sure of the Lords—so long will everything be safe. As, therefore, the salvation of the whole empire depends upon the condition of this branch of the legislature, it follows, logically, that no means must be left untried to secure this great and splendid result. As Sidney said—I presume, sir, you know Latin?—*aut viam inveniam—aut faciam.*"

"Which means," says Rooke, "If the devil don't find me out I'll find him," at which there was a general laugh.

"Is it your lordship's opinion, then," I said, "that the end justifies the means?"

"Undoubtedly it is; I believe not only that the end justifies the means, but that the means justify the end. Indeed no man can pretend to be a statesman who does not hold both as the very principal foundation of his polity. Is not this your notion, my good Doctor?"

And Lord Chesterfield turned to a solemn, shallow-looking individual in black, whom I afterwards ascertained to be Dr. Young, and who was then in the beginning of that career of desperate sycophancy which won for him in a short time, from his noble patrons, the lavish wealth in which he rolled.

"My dear and noble lord," answered Dr.

Young, "your lordship speaks now with the same consummate wisdom and truth which distinguishes every sentiment which falls from your lips. The greatest statesmen have always acted upon this principle which your lordship has so beautifully and tersely enunciated, and I have no doubt they will so continue to act until the consummation of all things. Nor, indeed, could affairs of moment be conducted otherwise; and it augurs well for the future of our happy land that such illustrious ornaments of the nobility as your lordship should maintain and act upon axioms which may be truly called the amulets of wisdom herself." And the reverend gentleman smiled and bowed obsequiously, like the devil when he begged as a little favour from Heaven the right to persecute holy Job.

"But, sir," I ventured to put in, "I had always thought it was only the Jesuit order who preached and practised the maxim you have alluded to."

Young looked at me with profound contempt. I was shabbily dressed, and evidently poor of purse—the two superlative degrees of baseness and abomination in the eyes of this paragon of parsons. He did not even deign to answer, but curled his lip, and grinned at his lordly patron, with a supercilious glance at myself and a servile

smile of adulation upon the peer, which were absolutely loathsome to look upon. Chesterfield himself regarded me as one regards some prattling child or braying ass, but unlike Young, he was too well bred to treat anyone with scorn.

"My good Mr. Smith," asked he, "how long have you been under the guidance of our esteemed friend Rooke here? I should have thought you would have learned better under such excellent auspices."

"By God! my lord," said the Cannibal, evidently frightened at being supposed to have instructed me in such blasphemous notions as that which I had just broached; "by God! my lord," said he, "I am wholly unanswerable for Mr. Smith, or his cursed follies in this respect, for I never saw him until this day."

"You have in truth, sir," said Young, glancing sarcastically at myself and my threadbare coat, "called them 'cursed follies;' for surely that must be 'accursed,' which questions the excellence of any of the wise and holy men, who are celebrated in Holy Writ, and who as we know, based much of their practice on what this inexperienced young gentle—I mean, man—has ventured to controvert. Laban, the son of Nahor, deceived Jacob when he covenanted for

Rachel—both were men of God, and we may be assured that the inspired penman would have left his stigma on the fraud if it were any in the eyes of Heaven. Abraham told lies to King Abimelech, and utterly frustrated him; the daughters of Lot also deceived their father, and became the mothers of great tribes. Jacob and his most religious mother deceived Isaac in his old age, for the righteous purpose of excluding Esau from his birthright, and we know how Heaven blessed the pious stratagem. The sons of Jacob answered Sheckem and Hamor his father deceitfully, and a great and splendid moral lesson of retribution was soon after given to these two royal, but most pagan personages, and their people, for 'the sons of Jacob came upon the city boldly, and slew all the males; and they slew Hamor, and Sheckem his son with the edge of the sword, they took their sheep and their oxen, and their asses, and that which was in the city, and that which was in the field, and all their wealth, and all their little ones, and their wives took they captive, and spoiled even all that was in the house.' These facts afford proofs, if any were wanted, that the means justify the end and the end justifies the means, for the end in all these cases was most holy; and though the means were such as very rigid moralists, or very

silly youths" (here again he glanced at me), "might venture to question, still I would rather believe the Sacred Scriptures than either."

"Capital, capital, my dear Doctor," cried Chesterfield, "you ought to be a Bishop, and if ever I come to be Prime Minister, you shall be the first to whom I give a wig, my blessing, and lawn sleeves."

"May God grant then that your lordship shall soon reach the object of your deserts," replied Young, with a prayer evidently from the heart. I thought within myself of Shakspere's line—

"The Devil can cite Scripture for his purpose,"

and I remained silent and ashamed. What a simpleton I must have looked! How these wise men must have despised me.

Lord Scarborough was now announced. He was a thick vulgar looking man, but not destitute of a certain intellectual development. Like his friend Chesterfield, he prided himself on infidelity; prated about Plato with a shallow flippancy; aped Voltaire, who had been in England a short time before, and had set the wits of half the peerage astray with his monkey scepticism and frog-like grimace; and having learned to laugh at all true religion, was of course a very apt tool for such a

minister as Sir Robert. My dear mother gives an account of him in one of her epistles, and alludes, I think, to some girl whom he seduced, and then abandoned (I rather fancy it was poor Miss Howe), which she supposes preyed on his sensitive conscience, for a very short time after this, he shot himself through the head—I suppose he had no heart—and was found a corpse by one of his domestics; who like a loyal follower, picked his pockets and fled. But whatever it was that made him *felo de se*, I have no doubt at all that he did that execution on himself which the hangman in the natural course of things, must have performed, had he not been a peer of the realm.

"My dear friend," cried Chesterfield, calling a smile into his yellow features, as I have seen the sun playing on an Egyptian mummy, "I am enchanted to see you. You have come about the election at Bilgewater, I suppose. Well, I think we shall be all right in that quarter. These two gentlemen here," and he pointed to the Cannibal and myself, "are about most kindly to take a great deal of trouble off our hands, and I have no doubt they will manage all things perfectly in order. Le Bayeux may make his mind easy about it."

"I have just left Sir Robert," answered Scar-

borough, "and he feels great anxiety on the subject—indeed, he sent me direct to you. He will be glad to hear your report, and I think I can't do better than return and let him know."

"No, no," answered Chesterfield, "let him wait. At present I would rather you stayed. We are in the middle of a curious metaphysical discussion."

"A metaphysical discussion!" ejaculated Scarborough.

"Yes, indeed," replied Chesterfield, "and upon a very intricate subject, too."

"I should have supposed," said the other, "that the election occupied all your thoughts."

"Not at all," rejoined my lord; "the election is safe I tell you, so now for ethics. The grand question is, whether the end justifies the means, and the means justify the end."

"Why, that has been settled long ago," said Scarborough,—"of course they do; everything is fair in war, love, or politics; and Jove does not more certainly laugh at lover's perjuries than the country does at the perjuries of elections."

Dr. Young fell into hysterics of delight at this sally. I really thought he would have fallen off his chair. A parson laughing at a great man's joke *is* a spectacle.

"Pooh, pooh," said Chesterfield, "Jove is nothing at all in these cases. Here is my good friend Dr. Young, who proves that Jehovah also laughs at them, and that you know is much better for us, constituted as things are in this Christian community."

Then there was another laugh. Vagrant as I had been, and living among vagabonds, I had not been used to this species of blasphemous wit, and I really began to get frightened. For the moment I began to think I was in Hell, and not on the earth at all. The nonchalance, however, of these two noble lords encouraged me. Surely the fires of Sodom and Gomorrah would not dare to fall down on Grosvenor Square while *they* were within its precincts, and Schulenberg was living next door. In such company I felt that I was safe. Heaven could not be so mean-minded as to sweep away in a horrid brimstone shower, Philip, Earl of Chesterfield, and Lumley, Baron Scarborough. As it turned out, I was right in my surmise. Grosvenor Square still flourishes.

"And how did our reverend friend establish that?" asked Lord S.

"By the plainest proofs from Scripture," answered Chesterfield—"but I won't ask him to

repeat them, for I have no doubt that he has twenty others equally good, and which will have the additional merit of novelty."

"My dear good noble lords," said Young, "you quite put me to the blush." (I looked at him, but saw none.) "I must really protest against being thus unexpectedly thrust into a discussion on a subject where I feel that my powers are feeble, indeed, before two such great wits and accomplished scholars as these I see before me; I have no objection to take a place in the picture, but if you please, it must be in the back ground."

"Oh! shameful," cried Chesterfield; "call you this backing your friends? Divinity, like a hangman, takes the lead in all questions of this nature, and we poor laymen philosophers, like the victim, follow humbly in the distance."

"Aye, aye," said Scarborough, "if the church don't guide us into the true way where else shall we find a lamp? She is the cur dog, and we the poor blind beggars that she leads. And I have no doubt that our reverend friend here will flash such new fireworks upon this cloudy subject, that we shall both be a match henceforth for any quibbling rascal who maintains that nothing can afford an excuse for artifice, or deceit, in the affairs of life."

"There are such rascals, indeed," said Rooke, with a melancholy air, "but if I were absolute monarch, I'd burn 'em all at Smithfield—or stick their silly heads on Temple Bar."

And as he spoke, I thought what a very appropriate administrator of colonial justice my friend would make.

Encouraged by this brace of great men, and the little dog that yelped at their heels, Dr. Young again launched forth into a subject in which he was well calculated to shine. He told us that as the Jews were the especial people of God, we must suppose that everything they did was under the direct inspiration of the Holy Ghost; and that as what was once right, must always be so, it followed naturally that whatever they did was the safe rule of action for all mankind. Hence deceit in speech was not only right and proper in all matters of life; but it was in fact most truly virtuous and excellent, and commendable, whenever any purpose was to be gained which the speaker believed to be good. And even if the purpose were radically vicious, that made no difference in point of morals, provided the deviser of it had persuaded himself that it was good. Thus assassination was by some persons of rigid scruples regarded as criminal; persons of mean capacity, and narrow understanding, who

had forgotten the most glorious pages of Greek and Roman history, where the assassin rose up refulgent with his dagger and afforded an heroic spectacle to Gods and men. But these men had not reflected that this species of political achievement was well-known in the most perfect government the world had yet seen, namely that of the Jews, and was expressly sanctioned—as in the case of Judith and Holofernes—if not commanded by Heaven. Nay, so anxious was their Deity to divest this glorious masterpiece of statesmanship of any features of horror that might be supposed to attach to it, and to clothe it with romance, loveliness, and poetry, that he in many cases inspired women with the illustrious design of freeing their people of a foe by the use of the dagger, or the nail. Thus Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, invited Sisera into her tents and gave him milk to drink, and covered him, and when he was asleep, "she took an hammer in her hand, and went softly unto him, and smote the nail into his temples, and fastened it into the ground, for he was fast asleep and weary. So he died." Therefore did the Lord inspire Deborah and Barak to sing this song, "Blessed above women shall Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite be; blessed shall she be above women in the tent. He asked water, and she gave him

milk; she brought forth butter in a lordly dish. She put her hand to the nail, and her right hand to the workman's hammer; and with her hammer she smote Sisera; she smote off his head, when she had pierced and stricken through his temple. At her feet he bowed; he fell; he lay down; at her feet he bowed; he fell; where he bowed, there he fell down dead. So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord," &c., &c. Here in truth was the most powerful and convincing proof that the end justified the means, for the pure and sacred penman concluded his narrative of this majestic stroke of politics, by significantly adding, "And the land had rest for forty years." None but vile atheists and blasphemers therefore, would dare to question the legality of this heaven-descended maxim. So also when the Lord repented him that he had made Saul King, he advised Samuel to deceive Saul with a lie, "and Samuel did that which the Lord spake," and Saul was deluded, and David was anointed monarch by the pious and Heaven-inspired son of Hannah.

* * * * *

But why pursue the theme. The reader may judge for himself from these samples the kind of learned and philosophical discourse which pre-

vailed. The world has since had the inestimable advantage of perusing Lord Chesterfield's private thoughts on morality, religion, deceitfulness and dancing; and though the public benefit has not perhaps been so great as might have been hoped for, still the public must be grateful for anything that fell from the mouth or pen of so great, so wise, so noble, and so good a man. Suffice it to say, that everything that passed was as witty and profound as that which the reader has just read; and that the two peers and the parson strove to out-do each other in educing prototypes of their own purity in religion and politics from the most noted characters in sacred or profane history. My cannibal companion occasionally joined in, but the three were so deeply interested in their speculations, that they took but little notice of him.

At last the Bully interrupted them—

"There is one matter," he said, "which I had almost forgotten—we must get Hogden."

"Who is he?" says Lord Chesterfield.

"Well," answered the Bully, "I hardly know. He is the best hand at bribery, after myself. He has already been the means of disfranchising one borough, which he corrupted by giving a shilling a piece for bloated herrings, and the whole place was in a state of drunkenness, riot, blasphemy,

debasement, and debauchery for a month. This is the way to win elections, my lord. Since then they call him 'The Bloater,' and he is like one. He and the notorious Ganderbill hunt in couples; but Ganderbill is now in difficulties, and we can't get him, so we must content ourselves with Hogden. All that humbug can do, *he* will do; his motto is, 'Go in and win, cost what it may;' and he trusts to the chapter of accidents to secure what he has won."

"We must certainly have *him*," says Scarborough.

And so it was agreed. We found him at a pot-house, on our way down—a short, fat, vulgar fellow, with a gold chain; very greasy, and smelling nastily, like an unsound codfish. I took care that he never came between me and the wind. He was the exact realization of Dryden's picture of the bookseller, Jacob Tonson—

> "With leering look, bull-faced, and codlike stare,
> With two left-legs, and Judas-coloured hair,
> And frowzy pores that taint the ambient air."

But he was a grand chap for all that. And the beauty of his tactics was this: he made it a habit to go about everywhere, and say that he abhorred bribery; and that if a shilling corruptly spent could return his man to parliament, he would not give it. As soon as he had been at

this talk for five minutes, he thrust a handfull of gold into the pocket of the voter, and with a wink and his blessing departed to play the same game with the next. This trick he learned from our House of Commons itself, which always preaches against corruption; while, tall bully as it is, it never fails to protect every scoundrel briber it can; and if a fellow like Hogden could by any trick become one of its members, it would support him even though a thousand committees, or commissioners, reported him guilty of the crime, which all its hypocritical members pretend to look at with horror.

But did they not expel Walpole? asks some amazed reader, for an offence of the same kind. They did, my dear friend; but the parliament of Queen Anne was honesty itself compared to the rogues that now constitute the lower house, though it did not profess half so much.

"Could I from the building's top
Hear the rattling thunder drop,
While the devil upon the roof
(If the devil be thunder proof)
Should, with poker fiery red,
Crack the stones and melt the lead;
Drive them down on every scull,
When the den of thieves is full;
Quite destroy the Harpie's nest—
How might then our isle be blest."

After a long interview Bully and I rose to take

our leave. As we did so, Lord Chesterfield handed to Rooke a leathern bag.

"Mr. Rooke," said he, "this bag contains two thousand guineas; there will be two thousand more ready before the end of the week. The number of electors I think is four hundred; we must have at least three hundred on our side. You may corrupt the men, seduce their wives, debauch their sisters, and promise to marry their daughters; if no other means succeed, empty the jails of imprisoned voters, and fill the jails with such as are in debt; distribute 'sugar' as lavishly as may be; in a word, stick at nothing, so that our man wins. Let this be your morning prayer and midnight orison—this election *must* be gained at all hazards. Now give me a receipt."

The Cannibal, who was a wag in his way, received the bag, and handed Lord Chesterfield the following memorandum:—

"Grosvenor Square.

"Received from the Rt. Hon. Lord Chesterfield the sum of two thousand guineas, to be expended in the purchase of three hundred English souls; and to be repaid with interest on the Day of Judgment.

"BULLY ROOKE,
"*Chief Chaplain to the Devil.*"

His lordship read the document, and smiled. Turning with his most fascinating grin to Dr. Young, he said—

"My dear doctor, I perceive that Mr. Rooke calls himself your chaplain—but the title is premature, for you are not yet an Archbishop, though quite ripe enough for any mitre;" upon which he bowed us out.

## CHAPTER XXV.

"Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for, but the *election* hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded. . . . . And David saith, Let their table be made a snare and a trap, and a stumbling-block, and a recompense unto them."

ANIMATED by the sublime and noble sentiments which we had the advantage of thus hearing from this inimitable ornament of the peerage, we took our leave and proceeded to Fetter Lane, from which we took coach to Bilgewater. The Cannibal was in high glee; his cock eye gleamed with a cat-like lustre; he put his hand repeatedly on the pocket which contained my lord's golden prescription, and, as he felt it safe and sound, a gratified smile crept over his rugged features, as I have seen the torch-light play upon the

boulders of the sea beach. At the end of the first stage we took up Shaveley Bill, a tall, awkward-looking customer, with tow-coloured whiskers, mean, cowardly, malignant features, and an eye full of malevolence, cunning, and envy, badly concealed by an affectation of bluff honesty which deceived many, but could not blind me. This genius was at present rather under a cloud; he had shortly before seduced an unfortuuate wretch of a barber's daughter, and taken her to live with him in a garret in the Temple; remorse preyed upon her, and within ten days of her ruin she poisoned herself, or was poisoned by him—Heaven knows which. I suppose he was glad to be rid of her. An inquest was held on her dead body. The jury got five pounds a piece, and the coroner fifty, so they brought in a verdict of death from natural causes. Shaveley's father, who was a banker's clerk, supplied the money; but swore that Shaveley himself should never enter his presence till he had repaid it. Hence his present expedition, for Rooke and he had been old pals, and the former put the present job in his way. The two interchanged some hieratic signals which I could not understand, and held a private conversation, apparently on matters too delicate for the public ear, but I did not much heed what they were about, having fallen into a reverie of thought

on the scene which I had just witnessed. Here were two men of patrician birth, with large fortunes, good health, and sound brains, and all that could make life pleasant, hereditary legislators in our happy land; yet they were so thoroughly impregnated with baseness, villainy, and corruption, as to be wholly insensible to any truth, any virtue, any excellence, and to live only for the gratification of vile and selfish desires, which they were not ashamed, but indeed gloried to avow. What wonder could it be if Savage and fellows of that class, who had never known what it was to possess a ten pound note that they could fairly call their own, were so low and lost when men of this high rank were utterly dead to all decency? I have seen young fellows of eighteen or twenty, young women, with babies at their breasts, hanged week after week at Tyburn who had stolen only a few shillings, or a few yards of ribbon; who had probably been guilty, at the worst, of only mere recklessness, the result of tipsy jollity, or boyish folly, or thoughtless indiscretion, and who had generous hearts, courage, faith, and truth in all ordinary matters, while the ribald mob rejoiced to see them die, and my lords the king's judges, those scarlet-coloured beasts, as an old Quaker once called them, pronounced their sentences to be right and well-

merited, as they adjourned to the corporation turtle soup and punch up-stairs at the Old Bailey. But here were two whom the world impudently called noblemen, and the law shamelessly pronounced right honourable, yet who in all respects —but an open violation of the statutes of their country—were as consummate scoundrels as ever swung upon the gallows tree. Here they were luxuriating like pigs in their filthiness, unconscious of their degradation, and half worshipped by admiring hundreds, perhaps thousands of persons, who thought themselves clever, and candid, and discriminating. And when I looked up and saw my two ugly companions engaged in carrying out the same kind of manœuvres as those in which these eminent personages were plotting, I began to despise and loathe myself for being involved in such foul proceedings; and was half inclined to jump off the coach, and walk back to London as poor as I left it; but I was almost starving, and I had not bravery enough—poor wretch that I was—to resist the fiend; so I stayed on. A base excuse, I own, but it is the true one.

We were now, indeed, engaged on one of the most rascally errands that can be imagined; we were about to corrupt the electors of an important borough, to vote black white, and white black; and by returning to parliament not the man best

suited to make laws for this imperial isle, or to advise on state policy, but the most dirty, low, or piggish knave who bribed them best, we were about to poison law and right at their very foundations; and introduce discord, dishonesty, and the certain seeds of dissolution to the whole empire. For as the franchise is a trust reposed in one man by several, and as upon the votes of a very few people the administration of the whole land depends, it follows that there is no responsibility on earth greater than that which thus enables a man to send a representative to the House of Commons; for the casting vote of that very representative may influence our destinies for ever; as, in fact, it did in the Habeas Corpus Act when passing through the House; it may plunge us into a war that will entail ruin. It may involve us in a dispute with powerful neighbours or aspiring colonies that will involve the lives of thousands of men, the happiness of babes and mothers, and wives and sisters; the destinies of unborn millions, and the destruction of blood and treasure to an incalculable amount. And our late war with Spain, and our present contests with the colonies in America, are a striking proof of what I have said; for they include within them as much sanguinary wickedness as ever was perpetrated on earth; but they have got the sanction

of Parliament, and all is therefore as correct as possible.

We got to Bilgewater late in the evening. We found that Hogden was well known there, he and Ganderbill having operated largely at the last election: both had been reported to the House for corruption and mal-practice; but the House thought it was a joke, laughed, said a few words to humbug the lieges, and went to something else, which also ended in a bottle of smoke. This is what always happens. The Red Lion, which was the head hotel, had been engaged for us beforehand, and we were ushered into the presence of the Hon. Thomas Vere Cavendish Plantagenet, eldest son and heir of Lord Rollo de Bayeux, and at the present moment one of the aspiring candidates in whose interests we were engaged. The Hon. Thomas was a small, mean-looking wretch, with a little head, a receding brow, the eyes and face of a polecat, and a soul and a mind to correspond; but his noble father had thirty thousand a year, and was a keeper of a privy something in the royal household, which as it was a post which nobody but a footman or a scavenger ought to occupy, was bitterly contested for by a score of illustrious families who traced their pedigree up to William the Conqueror, and who were accordingly the proudest people in the

whole world. The right honourable Lord Rollo de Bayeux carried gold candlesticks for his Majesty King George the Second, walking all the while backward, but with his face turned to that glorious monarch; he brought him waste paper, fetched his tobacco, carried billets of sweetness to his mistresses, or those whom he wanted to be so, and submitted to be kicked by the royal foot, and damned by the royal tongue when his Majesty was dyspeptic, or was out of temper with one of his German frows. For this dignified employment he drew about twelve hundred a year wages, and had the privilege of basking in the celestial sunshine of the court—which like certain other sunshine that falls upon a rotten pool, or a stinking dunghill, only fosters worms and grubs, and centipedes, and a hundred other crawling, slimy things, which we cannot bear to think of, and certainly should not like to see. But the crawling, slimy things admire themselves very much; and I have no doubt despise all other animals that do not creep and wriggle like themselves through dirt and rotteness.

The opponent of the honourable Thomas was worthy of the town which he came to represent, and the honest people whom he proposed to buy. He was a dirty broker from the city of London, of the name of Johnson, who had heaped up gold

by every fraudulent art known to commerce, and who would have sold himself to the Devil readily for any sum of money which that potentate would give. People talk of Jews! Why I have never yet known a Jew whom I would not rather deal with than most of the Christians with whom I have had the pleasure of transacting business. This fellow had sprung from nothing, but was now worth about two hundred thousand pounds; and as the people all about him worshipped wealth, much more than ever a bishop worshipped God, the little villain believed that gold was the *summum bonum* of everything, and accordingly concluded that he himself, as the possessor of this *summum bonum*, was the greatest man in the world. And now having exhausted almost all the knavish arts known on the Exchange for transferring money from the pockets of A into the bank of B, he resolved to get into Parliament, where he hoped to buy a baronetcy, and to shine at court, or at the levee of the great Sir Robert, whom all these monied men adored as the impersonation of everything that was exalted upon earth. He longed, also, to transmit hereditary honours to an only son, a spindle shanks noodle, with no more brains than a whelk, who spent all his time at the cockpit, and whom this worthy trader regarded as the apple of his eye. With

these grand hopes he came down to the borough, and made no secret of his intention to buy as many votes as money could purchase, and by hook or by crook to wrest the representation from the son and heir of Lord Rollo de Bayeux, whose castle was in the county, and whose family had usually commanded the consciences of the lick-spittle constituency whom we came to canvass. He had already set half the public houses flowing, and opened an unlimited credit at the Bank, but as he was new to the noble art of electioneering bribery, it was calculated, and not unwisely, that an experienced hand would eventually drive him out of the field. A third candidate had, indeed, shewn himself, but he was only a great scholar, a most wise and honourable person, who had no landed estate, nor any considerable balance at his bankers. He could offer nothing to the constituents but unimpeachable integrity, the purest and most elevated views of politics, united, however, with a practical statesmanship, that had merit its due, would have raised him to the administration of the government. But when it was clearly ascertained that he had no money to lavish in purchasing the pigs of electors, he was hooted out of the place as one of the most rascally and shallow impostors that had ever dared to practice on an enlightened constituency. Indeed,

his advent was looked upon as a crime, and himself a violator of everything human and divine for coming into Bilgewater without bags full of gold and a brain full of fraud. So that the contest was now confined to the two honourable and worthy gentlemen whom I have described, namely, Plantagenet and Johnson.

The honourable Thomas, &c., &c., &c. (I can't write so many grand names) was alone, and was reclining on a sofa. A table was before him, covered with fruit and various wines; and the honourable gentleman, if we may judge by his flushed features and staring eyes, had tasted rather freely of the latter. "He is slightly inebriated," whispered the Cannibal, when he saw him, and "slightly inebriated" let it be. In a meaner man, or in the candidate who had been hissed out of the place, it would be, he is "three parts drunk." He attempted to rise, but the effort was too much for him, and he merely put out one finger to the Cannibal, and said, "How do, Cannibal, how do?" at which gracious mark of friendly condescension the recipient of the finger and Shaveley Bill expressed their gratitude by genuflexions and prostrations worthy of a Dutch ambassador at Japan, or an English Catholic peer when he has the supreme honour of kissing the Pope's toe. As I was merely one of

the obscure rabble, I had not the superlative happiness of being introduced to the heir of Lord Rollo de Bayeux; so after staring at me for some time, he said to my companion, whom he appeared to know well, and treated with the most delicate politeness—

"Cannibal, who the devil is this?"

"One of our agents, sir," answered the party addressed; and then he spoke lower, and in a tone which I could not hear if I wished, and would not have bothered myself by hearing if I could. When he had ceased our host motioned me to take a chair, and rang for fresh glasses which soon were brought, after which the business of of the night began.

"May I ask sir, is your address out?" asked Rooke.

"No," replied the other; "not at all, I did'nt know what to say to the d—d fools," at which lively burst of wit, Shaveley Bill burst into a large guffaw of laughter in which the Cannibal, and the writer of this memoir (with shame I confess it) very quickly joined.

"May I ask then, sir, how you have employed yourself since you came?" asked Rooke with the most submissive politeness.

"Look!" answered the other, and he pointed to the fireplace, on which a scene presented itself

that would have gratified the worthy and independent electors of the town, had they but had the high privilege of being introduced as we were into this respectable presence. For there were about sixty rats, all dead and tied together by the tails, which formed a graceful festoon over the mantelpiece, and hung down to the floor at each side, like the flowing ends of a curtain, the carpet being spotted with the blood which dropped from the pretty creatures.

"God God!" sir, exclaimed the Cannibal, "what a sight," and he began to count the victims.

Shaveley Bill rubbed his hands, horse-laughed, and said—

"How jolly."

"Aye! by the everlasting Gad," says the candidate, "may I be d—d if ever I had better fun in my life—it beats fox hunting, which after this day's sport I vote low and vulgar in the extreme. By Gad! Cannibal, you shall see my dog. By Gad! he is the prettiest dog in the world; by Gad; you shall kiss him for the fun he has given me to-day," and reaching a bell rope, he tugged at it until it gave way and a frightened servant came into the room.

"Is that you, Fitz Howard?" asked our host,

"damme yes—I see 'tis you; fetch Billy here, and be d—d quick."

Fitz Howard vanished and soon after appeared with Billy. It was the renowned terrier which had given the honourable Mr. Plantagenet such rare pleasure, and the dog was certainly worthy of its master. Let us hope that in other and more spiritual regions, "His faithful dog shall bear him company."

"There are sixty rats in all," said the candidate, observing that the Cannibal was engaged in counting the heads of game—"only sixty—the infernal rascal of a ratcatcher could get no more. I paid him a shilling a piece for them. Damme, he should have had a five pound note if he had got me the hundred. But after scouring the whole place he could hunt up no more. So I laid a wager with the parson—damme you know him—Tom Fireaway—he and I were at College together—a great scamp he was too. My father gave him the living; faith I sometimes think he's my father's own son by Molly Segrave; damme, he bet me twenty guineas that Billy wouldn't kill the fellows in five minutes, and I took him, and we staked the money with the landlord. Then we housed the rats in here five minutes before dinner, and in four minutes and

forty seconds, by Gad! they were all squashed. What a scene it was—by Gad! it was splendid—by the Lord Harry I never had such cursed fun before. For we stopped up all the holes and corners and windows, and the fire place, and then the rats were let loose and Billy after them, while Tom and I got a d—d table, and damme the squeaking was fine. They scudded in all directions; they ran pell mell about and up and down, like so many hunted devils. By Gad! Cannibal you would have liked the sport—so we killed 'em all, and landlord and I fastened 'em together, and then Tom and myself sat down to dinner, and by Gad! I had a plate and chair brought up for Billy too, and now Tom is gone away to evening service, and by Gad! Cannibal, you shall kiss Billy, for he has won me twenty guineas"—and he absolutely pressed Rooke to it, until the fellow consented and kissed the terrier with every demonstration of satisfaction. And Shaveley Bill, scorning to be outdone in anything, performed the like feat, ejaculating as he did so, "how jolly."

Mr. Plantaganet looked next at me, but I would not take the hint.

"Damme," says he in a half whisper to the Cannibal, "your friend seems an infernal ass—don't he?" and he disdained to take

any further notice of me for the rest of the evening.

And now pens, ink, and paper were called for, and Rooke and Bill sitting on opposite sides of the table, began to put down various hints and sentences, and after about an hour's work, in which they occasionally consulted me (the honourable candidate was fast asleep during the whole period), the following address was produced, and when it was fairly copied, Rooke hummed loudly, which waked up Mr. Plantaganet, who said—

"Damme, why did you wake me? I was having a damned pleasant snooze."

Note here, dear reader, that in the course of a very long experience I have never yet known a *true* gentleman curse and swear, as some of my honourable comrogues have done.

"Sir," answered Rooke, "we have concocted an address to the electors, and we wish to know if it will meet your pleasure. Will you be good enough to hear it, sir?"

"Oh," replied the other, "you needn't have done that, you know I'll sign anything; the whole thing is humbug, isn't it?" And he winked very knowingly and began to whistle "The Rogue's March," in which these two worthy scribes at once joined.

"Humbug, indeed," said all three, and then they laughed, and then my friend and guide read aloud as follows:

"*To the Worthy and Independent Electors of the Ancient Borough of Bilgewater.*

"GENTLEMEN,

"The vacancy in your important town, caused by the melancholy demise of your late respected representative, entails upon you the honourable duty of returning to Parliament a successor worthy of your confidence, and of the great agricultural and commercial interests connected with the locality."

"That is all fudge," says our host, putting his finger to his nose, "but it reads d—d fine."

"Fudge indeed," rejoined Rooke, "for we know how the late member sold them whenever he could."

"And why the blazes shouldn't he," says Plantagenet, "when we know he bought them? Can't I do what I like with my own? If I buy a voter, can't I sell him?"

"Bravo, bravo," cried out Shaveley Bill; a remark at which Billy barked in unison with his fellow dog. The Cannibal resumed reading.

"Never was there a period in the history of

this great country, when it more behoved the worthy and independent men whom I have the high honour to address, to exercise their electoral functions with greater calmness, honesty, and discrimination. The eyes of all England are upon you; the whole empire watches the approaching contest with the most anxious eagerness as to its result; and you will be either crowned with glory by returning me as your representative, or politically annihilated by selecting the gentleman who I understand means to contest with me the distinguished post of your representative."

"Very good, very good," muttered Plantagenet, who was again getting sleepy, and the little beast began to snore on the sofa.

"The present is indeed a momentous crisis. Who can doubt that men like you—"

"And women," suggested our host, half waking. But Rooke paid no attention to the proposed amendment.

"Who can doubt that men like you will prove yourselves worthy of it, and of their country. The enemies of order—"

"Who are they?" asked Plantagenet, startled at the louder key in which Rooke read this paragraph.

"All humbug," said Rooke, in answer, "humbug—humbug," and he read on:—

"The enemies of order, conspiring against our beautiful and perfect constitution in Church and State, seek gradually to undermine the foundations of the splendid fabric which has been reared by the wisdom of our ancestors, and has outlived a thousand years, the envy and admiration of the whole civilized world. Against these enemies you may reckon on me as your most determined champion. Return me to Parliament, and I will oppose them with all the energies I possess."

"Bravo!" shouted the candidate; "it's d—d fine."

"I'm glad you like it," said Rooke, with a self-satisfied smile, "but I'm used to this kind of thing." Shaveley Bill drank off a tumbler of port, and said "how jolly," but whether he alluded to the wine, or to the address, remains unexplained.

The Cannibal resumed—

"Few boroughs in this country have been more eminently adorned with members of the British senate, or have been more devotedly served by a long line of celebrated men. Nor is this owing to chance alone, but to the independence, honour, and enlightenment of your incorruptible electors.

The late statistical returns which have been laid before the House of Commons, by his Majesty's command, shew, that while in all other boroughs in England the average amount of persons who can read and write is not quite a half-quarter per cent. among you, I am delighted to say it is as much as seventy three and the three ninths, thus affording the clearest demonstration of your superiority above other places that possess the franchise, and unfortunately use it only to abuse it—a thing which you have never done."

"Well I'm damned!" interposed our host, but he added, thoughtfully, "I say, Cannibal, isn't that *rather* strong? I never heard of such statistics, and even if I had, I shouldn't believe 'em. Where are they?"

"No where," answered Rooke, in the coolest possible manner.

"No where!" ejaculated Plantagenet, with open eyes.

"Of course not," added Shaveley Bill, "the whole thing is a lie; everything in politics is a lie. You didn't believe it, sir, did you?"

"But we shall be found out, you artful boy."

"Who'll find us?"

"The enemy—the opposite candidate."

"What! and by telling the worthy electors that

it is all moonshine, awaken their self love against himself, enable us to denounce him as a libeller and villainous slanderer, and probably secure his being tossed in a blanket for daring to question what the asses' own vanity will make them swallow down like new milk ?"

"By Gad!" ejaculated our patrician friend, "you're a precious pair, and I think the thing will do devilish well, so read on, by Gad!"

The Cannibal continued—

"With these principles—"

"Stop—stop!" said the host, "I have heard of no principles or pledges yet. Have you not missed some portion?"

"Not at all," replied Rooke, "there are no principles. Would you have us pledge you to anything? Principles indeed! I thought you had none, sir."

"Of course not," said the other, "of course not, my dear boy; I see, you're quite right; I see, I see."

"Principles be damned," said Shaveley Bill; and the Cannibal laughed, and read on.

"With these principles animating my public conduct, I ask you to return me to the Commons House of Parliament. Descended from a long line

of ancestors, whose names figure in the brightest pages of England's history, you may be sure I shall do nothing to disgrace them."—The Cannibal here winked at both of us, and made a sly gesture towards the dead rats; but Mr. Plantagenet did not notice it.—"I will devote myself night and day with an unselfish zeal to the promotion of your public and your private interests with a fearlessness of the court, and a freedom from popular interference that will, I hope, add to my influence as your representative. I shall be guided by the principles of glorious John Hampden, and actuated by the policy of our present Heaven-born minister, who, I believe, under Heaven and the king, is the best friend of liberty that England has. My efforts shall be directed to make our country the standard of wealth, freedom, and enlightenment, and to promote in all possible ways the best and truest interests of my constituents.

"I have the honour to be,

"Gentlemen,

"With the most devoted sincerity,

"Your truly faithful Servant,

"T. VERE CAVENDISH PLANTAGENET.

"*Bayeux Castle.*"

Rooke laid down the paper, and burst out

laughing. His example was contagious. We all indulged in a hearty explosion of mirth at the nonsense that had been read. Shaveley, as usual, howled out "how jolly!" I have read plenty of such things since, and when I do I always think of the "Red Lion," and laugh.

"Now," says the candidate, "as sure as Gad made Moses this will do 'em finely; and the beauty of it is, it pledges me to nothing, eh, isn't that so?"

"Except to the minister," put in the Cannibal.

"Oh! of course, of course—that's a matter of course," said our new friend; "and now, gentlemen, good-night—I'm sleepy. Send this humbug to the printer, and come to me in the morning to breakfast."

So he yawned, and we went away. We sat in the bar for an hour, drinking and smoking at his expense, chatting to the barmaid, and sounding his praises far and wide.

When we got into the streets next morning we found them placarded with long posters containing the precious epistle which had been concocted the night before. Before each one was an admiring crowd, and we could see by the looks of the electors that our flummery had not been thrown before swine, but that they believed all the fine things that we had told them, swallowing

it down with a truly British gusto, for who so gullible as dear fat John Bull, with all his boasted common sense?

We found our host at breakfast; he had not condescended to wait for us; and when that meal was finished we prepared measures—Bully, Hogden, Bill, and I. The following was only a portion of our tactics:—

We first engaged about a dozen deep knaves, who went into the enemy's camp, and by the most furious denunciations of Mr. Plantagenet and his principles, got into the confidence of the opposition, and were initiated, before the week was over, into all their devices, every one of which they communicated to us, thus enabling us in all things to countermine the foe. As the whole constituency numbered about four hundred, five-and-twenty of whom alone were unbribable, we engaged a great proportion of them, their wives, brothers, sisters, and sons as messengers, musicians, bill-stickers, laundresses, seamstresses, &c., &c., at the simple remuneration of five-and-sixpence a day; and as the nomination day was about a fortnight off they thus secured a very handsome allowance. But as the day of the grand struggle came near we found that the other side were paying seven shillings a head for messengers, and numerous were the deserters

from our side, whose names were nightly repeated to us. We were now obliged to pay up the difference in arrear, so as to make the pay given by our side equal to that which our opponents had given from the first. Suddenly there was a great demand for cider, and we purchased from a doubtful publican twenty pounds' worth of that delicious beverage which, as his wife assured us, would make him ours for ever; as for the publican himself, he declined to give any pledge, but referred us to his wife, who, he always said, guided him in politics. The other side gave her a brocade silk dress; the Cannibal sent her one of satin, embroidered with velvet, and a pair of glittering gold ear-rings—we bought them off a Jew pedlar for half-a-crown, but they certainly *looked* splendid. Hogden sent her a hymn-book, with a bank note inside, which carried the day, and we had, after that, no more staunch or devoted adherent than the publican and his spouse. But the excitement now became dreadful. Mr. Plantagenet ordered two dozen pairs of boots, and the worthy maker received for each of these useful articles of attire the moderate price of five guineas—leather, I suppose, having suddenly been raised in price, owing to the war, or the peace, or the bad harvest, or the plentiful supply of rain, or some other calamity of a similar description.

Hats were sold for five pounds each, whereupon the other side bade six, and fairly drove us out of the market. We could not get a single independent hatter to have anything to do with us; they voted us mean, shabby, niggardly, and enemies of the British Constitution. Every tavern in the place was now kept open at the expense of one or other of the honourable candidates. Hogden was in his element; he became more sanctimonious every day; he seemed to have got the whole of Sternhold and Hopkins off by heart, and where ever he went he poured it into the ears of the godly. He had already presented a couple of sucking pigs, one to the Rev. Aminadab Groanley; another to the Rev. Jehosaphat Diggnan, who presided over a few select spirits, whose religious tenets were hardly known, but who numbered certain voters among them, and made no secret that money was the god of their political principles. These sucking pigs had a new kind of stuffing, of which Hogden was the grand inventor; this was simply a bit of paper, which, when opened, discovered to the delighted recipient a fifty pound note; and it was marvellous what a stimulus to electioneering zeal a dainty of this kind gave to the reverend recipients! Nothing but Plantagenet! Plantagenet! rang from their lips, at pulpit and tea party; nor were they silent on the virtues of Hogden.

Two more wretches remained, who were also secured. These rapscallions were joint proprietors of the *Bilgewater Post*, a wretched rag which circulated in the town, and had a good pot-house connection. A few pounds bought this journal, with all its staff, body and soul; they sent their farthing-a-liners to all Plantagenet's meetings, and though the little rat-catcher could not speak two sentences of decent English, they represented him as a second Pitt. They sent the same assassins to our opponent's meetings, and everything he said was so coloured, falsified, and perverted that the electors who did not attend half believed he was little better than a maniac; and this, though it did not prevent their taking his money, merely gave them an excuse for demanding higher prices, for the greater the fool the higher the bribe. This became the shibboleth of the town, and increased our opponent's expenses—a trick never to be forgotten in elections.

All soon became riot, drunkenness, and debauchery as befits an election carried on according to truly Constitutional principles. We were blue, our opponents were scarlet; and when the respective bands and backers of each met, awful and sanguinary were the struggles. These brought the surgeons, the apothecaries, &c., &c.,

into requisition, and as we paid handsomely as well for our own wounded men as those of the enemy we had the medical profession secured. Shaveley Bill shouted every night from the balcony of the hotel until he got hoarse and could speak no more. Hogden attended no end of pious tea parties, quoted scripture, and insinuated guineas. The honourable candidate also addressed the electors, but nearly ruined himself by once having his umbrella held over his head during a shower of rain while the electors endured the pelting of the storm, and greeted him with groans and laughter for his effeminacy. Now the blue was in the ascendant, now the scarlet was victorious, and on the day before the election the Cannibal came to me in despair, and said—

"We must buy cats, bottle voters, bid for bloaters, and poll dead men, or we shall lose the election."

The feline merchandise at once commenced. Never had grimalkin been so valuable—at least never since Dick Whittington sold his cat to the Soldan of Morocco for a ton of gold, and blessed the day that he came back a happy boy to Bow Bells. Mousers that belonged to free and independent voters were sought after everywhere—those of the constituents who hadn't cats stole them, and great was the

outcry among the old women whose tabbies were ruthlessly abducted from them. The "Red Lion" was soon filled with these unfortunate creatures, and as each was purchased for twenty pounds, there seemed no end to their importation. We could only destroy them as fast as they were brought; and a man offered Fitz-Howard sixpence a piece for their carcases, which that worthy was but too happy to receive. Hogden went about in all directions purchasing bloaters at unheard-of prices. He penetrated every lane and alley; wherever he went he opened his pockets. In one hole we bought a grey parrot for fifty guineas; in another we gave the same amount for an old pig which was at the point of death, kindly allowing the owner to kill and eat it. To the women who were in the family-way we said "Goody this, or Goody that," whatever her name might be, "wouldn't you like a silver cup for the young 'un? Christen him after Mr. Plantagenet, and the thing is done." And there were actually some twenty cups brought down from London to the "Red Lion" for these precious babes.

Mr. Plantagenet's address was printed on blue satin by one of the mercers in the town and distributed in hundreds. This cost a vast sum, but the worthy mercer's vote was won. Such an ex-

hibition of high and patriotic principle worked an astonishing change in our favour. We now began to "bottle." Thirty-five doubtful voters were invited to a champagne supper at the "King's Head," the landlord of which was in our interest. Shaveley Bill was appointed to fill the chair. Three large waggons, each drawn by six horses, with plentiful relays, were engaged. After a most delightful entertainment the waggons and the visitors were found next night some fifty miles away from the town where the election was held, and even then the independent freemen had not wholly recovered the intoxicating effects of the champagne which they had drank—I won't say how much our laudanum bill was, as Rooke managed all these matters. Rooke next prepared his "dead men." The lists of the constituency were carefully gone through, and various worthy fellows were procured who personated voters who had long since lain at rest in the churchyard. The make up of these varlets was excellent, even the widows of the real defunct parties, and in many instances their mothers, and surviving friends and relations boldly declared—after they had had a short interview with the Cannibal in a private room—that the dressed-up voters were the *bonâ fide* persons whom they represented, and though the other side were on the alert, Rooke did not care a farthing.

"Win the election any way," said he, "then let them petition if they like. We can make it cost them nine or ten thousand pounds; the chances are we can buy them off for a quarter of the sum, and then the election will be ours."

So we resolved to poll the dead men with the most utter fearlessness. This, and the bottling, and the lying, and the cat buying, and bloater catching, we hoped would secure us the election—a hope in which, as it subsequently turned out, we were not disappointed.

But the grand stroke of all remained, in which our new but unsavoury friend Hogden won great laurels; indeed, "The Bloater" considered it his trump card. Two or three days before the nomination the whole district, even for miles round, was covered with gigantic posters, bordered with black, in which our opponent was represented as a man noted for his blasphemies and debaucheries; the character of his wife—a most honourwoman—but what did Hogden care?—was virulently assailed, and she was dragged into all the filth of the election whirlpool, in a way that ought to have made any body of Englishmen blush; but the majority of the constituency were now so debased that they seemed to think any amount of dirt, falsehood, or filth, which could secure a triumph for their favourite was perfectly allowable, and their reverend advisers, I am sorry

to say, were foremost in their approval of these tactics. After this other posters came out, in which our opponent was represented to the constituency as having come down to the borough under false colours, being bribed to sell his party; to profess principles of which he was not the true advocate, and to commit I know not how many other equally odious treasons. Lastly, on the very day before the election, the following placard was posted, as having emanated from the religious community, of which our opponent was a leading and a shining light; and as it purported to have come from London there was of course no time for a contradiction to be put forth.

MR. JOHNSON AND HIS CHURCH.*

The following communication has been received by the hon. candidate for Bilgewater; and the true, honest, and religious "Scarlets" are affectionately asked whether they can possibly vote for a man who has been expelled from his own religious community for his sayings and doings while canvassing this borough?

DEAR SIR,

Since our interview with you last night, when you positively denied the charges of blasphemy and debauchery brought against you in

* This, with one or two alterations, is an actual copy of a short blasphemous excommunication, which really took place at B.

the Hon. Mr. Plantagenet's committee bills, we have made the fullest enquiries, and are now satisfied that the charges are true, and that your denial cannot be relied on. Our deacons likewise have had interviews with various gentlemen who attest their truth in every particular. It appeared to us, also, from your manner that when you were giving your denials, you were evidently stating what you knew to be false. Under these painful circumstances we felt that we could do no other than bring the matter before the Church, who have this evening passed a resolution for your expulsion. This step is solely taken because of your conduct while at Bilgewater, which is already the topic of general remark, to the injury of the cause of Christ, with which you and we have been connected. We most earnestly assure you we have taken this step in no spirit of unkindness, but solely as a duty we owe to Christ; and our earnest prayer has been, and will be, that God will give you repentance unto life eternal, and that you may find peace and pardon again, through the blood of Christ, which cleanseth from all sin.

SHALMANEZER TOMKINS, Pastor.
JEROBOAM DULLY, } Deacons.
ABIATHAR JONES, }

*London.*

It was in vain that our honourable opponent, Johnson, went about everywhere denouncing this as a forgery. Wherever he went he was followed by hired gangs, the very scum and filth of Bilgewater, pelted with stones, old bottles, mud, and rotten eggs. On the day of the election a number of fellows were sent in every direction, with bells and handbills, and copies of the *Bilgewater Post*, in which the honest electors were warned against voting for him, as he had been taken to the county jail the night before on some criminal charge connected with the election. The lowest rabble with eyes like ravenous wolves, and tongues like mad dogs, were posted round each polling place howling at all his supporters; dinning these and all sorts of lies into the ears of the general body of voters; hurrying them off to public houses and taverns; plying them with drink, till the whole constituency grovelled before us like dirty beasts; slipping money into their hands, and perpetually asking: "Would you vote for a man that's hired to sell you? Hasn't he got his price in his pocket? Hasn't he been expelled by his own church, after full enquiry? Didn't I hear him swear and blaspheme so and so?" repeating all the awful language which was contained in Hogden's placards. Need I say that all this had an immense effect?

I was near forgetting another and final stroke of ours, which I believe decided the election. About the last hour, when there were still a great number of "doubtfuls"—and only conscientious characters, who even *then* could not make up their minds as to the respective merits of the rival candidates, and when *we* could hardly be said to be safe, Rooke rushed into the head committee-room in great excitement. "Now is the time for the hundreds," he shouted, and with a profusion of oaths and blasphemies, he summoned Hogden, Shaveley Bill, and the bell-man to his presence. The three came, and the Cannibal pulled out an immense bundle of hundred-pound bank notes. Giving a handful to our two worthy friends, he said to the bell-man, "Up and ring the street, you ugly hang-gallows; up and down like wild fire. Let your bell ring and your throat proclaim a hundred-pound note to every man who has not yet voted." And to Hogden and Shaveley he said, "Give these to all the doubtful, right and left." I started at this open act of suicide, as it seemed to be; but Hogden and Shaveley, put their fingers to their noses and called out "How jolly!" then rushing into the streets, did as they were told. In less than twenty minutes all the "doubtfuls" were secured and had voted for us; and it was only when they took their notes to be changed

that the unfortunate victims, who could neither read nor write, discovered they had been shamefully cheated, and instead of a hundred-pound note of the Bank of England, they found they had sold themselves for a base bit of paper which was payable only at the Bank of Elegance. But their votes had then been given, and it was neither bribery nor corruption, as several good lawyers held.* But I anticipate. The day preceding the election, Plantagenet, who was a horrid coward, sent for the Cannibal. We found him in his bed-room; he was quite pale.

"Cannibal," said he, "I'm told I shall be attacked going to the hustings to-morrow. How shall we manage?"

"That's all right," replied my friend, "I have got Figg, the Champion of England, down already; he represents the heavy weights. Jem Blood, of the light weights, is also come. I have promised them twenty guineas apiece, and woe to the man that lifts his hand against your honour."

Plantagenet smiled faintly. The dirty little craven took courage, and shook the Cannibal by the hand.

* This excellent electioneering device was afterwards imitated with success at an election for the County of Worcester, when Mr. Foley owed his return to it.

"Bravo! my good fellow," said he, "you shall have the first Judgeship that I can procure; and an honour you'll be to the Bench!"

Next day we proceeded to the hustings, with drums beating, colours flying, trumpets sounding, dogs barking, the populace shouting, Groanley and Diggnan singing psalms, the women waving handkerchiefs, and all the other stupid folly of a contested election. Our plans and plots all succeeded; we carried everything before us. The opposition candidate was half murdered; his proposer and seconder were overwhelmed with filth, and the day ended with the triumphant return of the honourable scion of Plantagenet.

A great moral victory this was, no doubt, and so the honourable member regarded it. We had a grand dinner, at which every one present got drunk, to the music of Sternhold and Hopkins, which Hogden led off, and from whose effects they did not recover for a week, to the great profit (again) of the medical profession, but to the great disgust of Brownlow Blades, a very honest fellow, who had written several excellent pamphlets, strongly recommending temperance. We had a chairing through the streets, and several more fights, and half the town was mad with gin, tobacco, and excitement; and the electors were in fact changed as by the Wand of

Comus, into dogs, swine, and monkeys. We had a funeral procession, and a coffin bearing the name and character of our opponent carried through the town of Bilgewater, with Rooke and Shaveley Bill for mourners. Tom Fireaway read a burlesque of the burial service, in which he was assisted by the other two reverend gents, and the coffin was buried under a dunghill, amid a profusion of dead cats, for which we had so handsomely paid. And now our election bills came in fast and furious, and the Honourable Thomas pulled several very long faces as he perused them; but the lord privy, &c., paid them, and so there was no trouble on that score; though the other side basely whispered that the "heaven born minister of the day" discharged them out of some secret fund which was annually set apart for that especial purpose. If Walpole did I have no doubt he was quite right, and I am sure that he was very properly reimbursed for it by the patriotic votes of the new member; so all came straight and square in the end, and the Scarlet party were thoroughly put down, and scarcely ventured to wag their tongues against us. The defeated candidate petitioned, but nothing came of it; everything seemed a humbug, from the beginning to the end; and though a few choice spirits called attention to the matter

the House, Walpole and some of his buffoons
ghed them down; and even Pulteney did not
:k to his man. It was all a swindle. The
use went the length, it is true, of ordering
gden to be prosecuted for bribery; but that
:thy was true to his colours, and having con-
'ed to fee the Attorney General's Clerk and
: or two others connected with the office, he
naged to escape that high functionary, who
3 himself probably too busy to bother himself
ch about such raggabrash; and thus Hogden
aped amid a derisive cheer of joy from all
bribers and blackguards of the kingdom.
t what did *they* think of a Senate that con-
ed at such rascality? Why simply this, that
ry fellow in it, being tarred with the same
sh, thought it hard to press upon a delinquent
: Hogden and his like, without whose aid,
3, and appliances, every honourable member
:w that he himself also must have lost the
t to which he aspired. But thus this honest
rld wags, and so I suppose it perpetually
l wag on, while the true British lion shakes
mane at all the earth, and with his roar
:lls the affrighted forest.

And Mr. Plantagenet went into Parliament,
ere he distinguished himself by his anecdotes
rat-catching, told at Bellamy's with great

applause (for he was too modest to address Mr. Speaker), until from rat-catching he mounted to the noble sport of dog-fighting, bear and badger-baiting, the cock-pit, the bull, and, finally, the prize ring, where once in a combat with his old backer, Jem Blood, who was teaching him to spar, at half-a-guinea a lesson, his left eye was unfortunately knocked out, which reduced him to a political nonentity, for he soon after retired from the exalted position of a British senator, and settled in the country as an active magistrate and patron of the cucking-stool and stocks. Here he passed his rosy leisure, till he succeeded to the peerage, when he married the eldest daughter of the Duke of A., one of the loveliest women in England, who soon after ran away from him, and left him to the company of his dog Billy, who thus became the joy and solace of his old age. He—the nobleman, not the dog—enjoyed the reputation of having killed more rats and corrupted more country girls than any other member of the peerage, and his son and heir inherits the same exalted tastes. I met him at White's some years ago, and was present at a wager he laid with the Marquis of Queensbury as to the respective speed of two black beetles. The stake was five thousand guineas, and Queensbury won (as he usually does), and laughed at young Plan-

tagenet, which I thought rather unfeeling. But I digress. Let me come back to more modest themes.

An incident which happened a day or two after the election deserves to be recorded. The Cannibal, Shaveley, Hogden, and myself, remained of course in town, to settle all outstanding claims, and to arrange certain little matters with our honourable and independent committeemen. We were rather surprised one evening to receive a message from Alderman Bullface, who had been among the bitterest of our opponents in the late struggle. He was down stairs, and begged to be admitted. He was shown into the room, and the Cannibal warmly shook hands with him; for Bullface had great influence over his own people, and if we could but get him to our own side, all hope for the Scarlets would be utterly and for ever extinguished, so nicely were these two great constitutional parties balanced. Bullface returned the Cannibal's greeting with equal favour, and having shaken hands with several of the committeemen, begged permission to be heard. It was at once granted, and Shaveley Bill and Parson Fireaway simultaneously cried out, "Hear, hear; a cheer for Mr. Alderman Bullface."

"Gentlemen," says the Alderman, "I admire

the spirit and the pluck with which the late election was carried. All is now over; let bye-gones be bye-gones. We have had a fair stand-up fight; we have got a bellyfull, and you have won the belt. All this is right and fair, and I don't complain. But the election has had this important effect on my own mind, and on those of the gentlemen who usually go with me. It has separated us for ever from the Scarlet party."

Here there was a tremendous burst of applause, which nearly knocked the ceiling of the room to pieces. The excitement was perfectly dreadful; several of the committeemen in their wild eagerness to embrace and congratulate Bullface on his independent spirit, jostled against and knocked each other down, and the cheering for "Bullface," "Bravo, Alderman." "Three cheers for Alderman Bullface," "Well done, my hearty," "Bullface for ever," &c., &c., which arose, almost broke the drums of our ears. The Alderman listened calmly and philosophically; he was as unmoved as Socrates when his friends surrounded him in prison—and some wept, while others preached. I often wonder the Grecian sage did not kick both the pedants and the pulers to the deuce. When the hurricane had subsided, the worthy Alderman resumed—

"Yes, gentlemen, I have been treated with

base ingratitude; but no more of this. I am here to make the arrangement I have mentioned; in all coming struggles you may rely on me and on my friends, and I hope to make up by my future conduct for any inconvenience I may have put you to by my former opposition. And now, gentlemen, I bid you all good night," and the Alderman appeared as if he were about to withdraw.

The thing was impossible. What! suffer the worthy Bullface to depart in this manner? It was out of the question. He must stay—he must have a glass—a bottle—a pipe—anything, everything—nothing that money could procure would be too precious for this high-spirited and independent elector, who carried six and forty votes in his breeches pocket. We all gathered round him and entreated him to remain. The Cannibal would not permit his departure—he went and locked the door. The chairman of the committee, who happened also to be the mayor of the town, never heard of such a proposition in his life. The Rev. Mr. Fireaway begged him not to go. Shaveley Bill said he'd sing "The Great Plenipotentiary" if the Alderman would but sit with them half-an-hour. Hogden offered to sing one of Sternhold and Hopkins's psalms if he'd remain.

At length, after great entreaty, Bullface again addressed them—

"Mr. Mayor, and gentlemen of the Blue Committee," said he, "this is the proudest, happiest moment of my life. It is impossible for me to express what I feel. Why, oh, why have we been so long on opposite sides? Why have we been so long blind to each other's excellencies? I am delighted to have found so many and such kind friends—and all for the performance of a simple act of duty. With pleasure I accept your kind hospitality—but only on this condition, that you also will partake of mine. When we have had a glass or two, suffer me to hope that you will not refuse to partake of a little supper with me. If I receive your consent, I will but step over to the Swan and order it; we shall have it nice and hot, and it shall be ready in an hour. It must be pot luck, gentleman, for I really don't know what they can get at a moment's notice; but though plain and simple, we shall not the less heartily enjoy it."

There were several hungry fellows on our committee, who enjoyed nothing better than a feast at another man's expense. They smacked their lips at the anticipated Aldermanic banquet; the invitation was accepted, and Bullface stepped across the street to give his orders. He was not

away more than five minutes, and when he came back there was a sunny smile on his face.

"Mr. Mayor and Gentlemen," said he, "I am happy to inform you that they can supply us. It is now eight o'clock—supper will be ready at nine. Until then, let us sit down and talk over the past like good fellows."

And we did sit down; what capital boon companions we all were. Since the days of the primitive Christians there was not a more delightful "love feast" than that which was to come, and of which this drinking bout was to be the prelude. Groanley and Diggnan compared the meeting to the primitive Agapæ. We drank, at Plantagenet's expense, the most excellent claret that could be got for money—we swilled it about like water; we warmed it with real Cogniac. At nine we adjourned to the Swan, and were shewn into the supper room. Covers were laid for thirty. We were twenty-five committeemen; Bullface, Hogden, the Cannibal, Fireaway, Shavely Bill, myself, and the landlord of the Red Lion, who had shewn himself a most desperate partisan all through the election, completed the number. Bullface sat at the head near the door, with the Cannibal and Fireaway on his right, Shaveley Bill and Hogden on the left; the landlord of the Red

Lion occupied the vice-chair, and the dishes were quickly uncovered.

"Mr. Mayor and Gentlemen," says Mr. Bullface, "it is a plain supper; at this short notice I could get nothing but rabbits in the borough—nor could even these be got in sufficient quantity, only that, as you know, to-morrow is our great rabbit fair, and I fortunately waylaid a higgler who was on his way to it, and bought two dozen of his finest. Mine host of the Swan tells me they have made a most beautiful stew, and indeed they smell deliciously. Let us dispatch them as soon as possible. I have ordered four or five dozen champagne to follow."

Saying this, the Alderman began to help those who sat near him. There were six dishes of these delicious animals, each containing four; they steamed with onions, pepper, and many other fragrant condiments. The sparkling vision of the coming champagne inspired the committeemen, and ample justice was done to the Alderman's rabbits. The company indeed was profuse in their praises.

"I never tasted anything sweeter," said the Mayor.

"They are perfectly delicious," said Hogden.

"Rabbit me," cried the Cannibal, "but this is the best part of the election.

"How jolly!" roared out Shaveley Bill.

"Gentlemen," said Bullface, "enjoy yourselves, I am delighted to see you."

"But, Mr. Alderman," cried the Mayor, "how is it you're eating none yourself?"

"My dear Mr. Mayor," answered our host, "I have drank so much of your excellent claret, that I really have no room, but I will begin presently. In the meantime let me help you to this back—it is fat and plump."

And so the plates went round, and silvery was the clatter of knives and forks. I was myself rather a spectator than an actor in this happy scene. The fact was, like the Alderman himself, I had indulged in the claret, until I felt disposed for nothing else; I therefore fiddled with a bit of bread. But Groanley and Diggnan stuffed themselves like boas.

Half an hour or more, having been thus delightfully enjoyed, the Alderman arose, and apologising for leaving the room, said he was going to see after the champagne. In his absence we drank his health in some very good beer, and all agreed that there was not a better fellow in the world.

In a few minutes the hamper of champagne was brought in, and laid on the table. A note at the same time was handed from the Alderman to

the Mayor, which the latter read aloud. It was as follows:—

"Friday night.

"DEAR MR. MAYOR,—

"I am unexpectedly called away by a sudden matter, which admits of no delay. Pray make my apology to the company for my unlooked for absence. I hope you will enjoy the sham.

"Yours truly,

"JOHN BULLFACE."

We had a laugh at the worthy alderman's mode of spelling the first syllable of champagne.

"But as it's French," says the Mayor, taking, as a matter of course, the vacant chair, "why our departed friend cannot be expected to know anything of a foreign lingo. He's a good John Bull, and true son of old England, I know. In the meantime, gentlemen, so long as his wine is real, we can overlook the spelling," and gently smiling at his easy humour, he drew the hamper towards him.

"Waiter," said he, "bring the nippers, and

Champagne tumblers. Gentlemen we shall drink in bumpers and no mistake."

It seemed to me, that for a hamper containing so many bottles of wine, it was wielded without much trouble by our worthy President. However, he himself, intent on approaching bliss, evidently heeded nothing but to draw forth the contents as speedily as possible. He cut the cords and lifted up the lid. We could see no bottles, nor any straw in which they were likely to be concealed. The mayor put in his hand, and drew forth a brown paper parcel nicely sealed, and addressed to "His Worship." We all gathered round him. With anxious trembling hand he tore open the parcel, and revealed to our astonished view, twenty-four cat's tails, together with the head and claws of an old gray parrot. In a moment the horrible truth flashed on us. We had supped on—but let me pause.

O! Bullface.

The whole company was sick in five minutes. Never was there a more awful *cat*astrophe.

* * * * *

The reader may probably ask me, "Pray, Mr. Montagu, what were you doing, during all this hard fought election?" That is my secret, which I am not at all bound to reveal. I only know,

instead of fifty, I got a hundred pounds out of the successful candidate, and that was all I cared for. Disgusted with myself, and all I had seen, I hastened back to London, and made a vow that before I would again mix myself in an election contest with such dirty fellows as Rooke and Hogden, I would beg my bread from door to door, even if I had to take my wife and children on my back; or enlist as a soldier, and starve honestly on sixpence a day.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

"The sword without and terror within, shall destroy both the young man and the virgin."

During all this time, I had not forgotten what I owed to my loved Francesca. I searched the peerage books, consulted a lawyer, and made enquiries as largely as I could without attracting particular attention to either of us. Under my incognito of Smith, I was to some extent safe, but I did not care much to go into the fashionable parts of the metropolis too openly, for I dreaded recognition, not only by my mother's friends, but by Dom Balthazar, whom I instinctively knew to be after me, animated as much by vengeance as by thirst of money. My Francesca scarcely ever ventured out except in my company. I dis-

guised myself so as to be as unlike as possible what I had been among the gypsies. It may be asked why I did not keep my promise to Francesca, to fly with her to my father, and replace her in her proper sphere? The answer is—and I know that it is an unsatisfactory one—I delayed doing so until I could present her in her true character. I plumed myself with the grand hope that I should go before Mr. Wortley Montagu, and say, "Here I am, I present to you as your daughter-in-law, a scion of a most noble house. She is all mine, for she loves me entirely for myself. She loved me when she knew not that I was other than a wanderer." This I thought would be at least a part in which I should worthily appear. But how could I venture before him until the great object of my search was accomplished? To introduce into his house a gitana—for in no other light would she stand until her true descent was established—would be to incense him and his wife against both with an unextinguishable fury. Besides, to own the truth, I did not particularly desire to face him. There was a vagabond independence, an erratic Arab sort of freedom in my present mode of life that pleased me. For mere animal pleasures I did not care much. My father with a million at his back, could live on fifty pounds

a year; why should not I be able to make the same boast? Our garret was neat and modest; we passionately loved each other; we read, wrote, and studied together. She was delighted—poor child—with my scanty earnings. Our treasures in that way seemed inexhaustible. My brain appeared a golden mine on which I could draw at will. And then how exquisite a luxury was her praise of my works when perfected. One word of commendation from her was worth all the applause of the critics. Mrs. Sale was enchanted with her, as who would not be? She flashed upon her like a new star. I repeat there was a vagrant charm, a strange eccentric fascination in the whole affair, which restrained me from making any offer to return home, and though I knew that I had outgrown schools and rods, and had no fear on that head, still I did not really need Lady Mary, her husband, or their splendid home. We had love in a garret, and that sufficed for all things—let misers and money-grubbers say what they will.

One day when I returned home (we had now been about six months in London), Francesca told me, with an appearance of strange alarm, that she had seen Dom Balthazar pass by, and look up at our house. She happened to be at the window at the moment, and suddenly drew

back, but did not venture to look out again to observe whether he had stayed to reconnoitre, or whether his movement had been anything indeed but casual. This information gave me some alarm; yet I heeded little that could be done in the way of open violence. I was in the middle of the metropolis, where it would have been hard at all events to perpetrate any great outrage; or openly violate the laws. However, I thought it as well to guard against all risk of danger, and we left our lodgings the following day, and went into an entirely different part of London. We neglected, however—as afterwards appeared—one most material precaution; for the person who removed our things carried them straight into our new dwelling, and we forgot to bribe him into silence, or rather we never suspected that our change of residence might thus by an active adversary be easily traced. We were now happy again. Francesca's fears gradually abated, and I went abroad as usual among my coffee-house friends and patrons. It happened that I remained there one night later than usual. When I left, it was past midnight. I had been detained by the buffooneries of that reverend quack Orator, Henley, who held forth to an admiring audience of fops and witlings in the most extraordinary medley of learning, farce, scurrility, and indecency that has

ɔen heard since the days of Aretino, or Rabe-
is—or to go further back, perhaps Aristophanes
mself, that mad wag of quality who has so
any sins against propriety and Socrates to
ıswer for. The subject was, I think, "The
arriage of Cana in Galilee," and while a large
ɔrtion of the comedy was borrowed from poor
oolston, a great deal more was the proper
cubration of our renowned tub-Thersites;
ıd loud was the applause which he excited. We
ıeerfully subscribed our sixpence at the close,
ıd the mountebank making a low bow, wished
ı all with old Nickolas, who he assured
ı was his proper Metropolitan and Archiman-
ite, and would gratefully reward us for the
ɜsons which we had just learned from his
credited clergyman. I walked home part of
e way with old Colley Cibber, who among
her profane sexagenerians, had been loudest of
l the assembled rascals in his applause. He
ıs not quite old enough to remember Sir Charles
ɔdley's horrible exhibition of himself in Covent
arden, or Rochester's sermon as a foreign quack
ı Tower Hill; but he had known persons who
ıd been present at both, and having heard them
ɔquently described, he declared that Henley's
ıs a more agreeable treat to all blackguard-
inded individuals than either; adding he

wouldn't have missed it for a score of guineas. We parted at a cross street, and I wandered slowly homeward. Suddenly I felt myself seized, gagged, and bound. I was flung into a hackney coach; two men instantly jumped in after me; a secret direction was given to the driver, and I was hurried off with the rapidity of a hunt. The night was dark, and we moved so rapidly that even had I known my companions, I doubt whether I could have recognised them. A passing glimpse of light from a dying lamp revealed two faces masked. Not a word was spoken. We rode for about two hours, without once stopping. We made a momentary halt at some turnpike gates; but they flew open as if by magic, and we passed through unchallenged. At length, when the morning gray was almost breaking, we stopped at an iron gate; it opened, and we proceeded up a dark avenue. A house with one solitary light appeared in the distance. I was brought in, led upstairs, and thrust into a bedroom in which a fire was burning, screened by an iron-wire guard. A light also was hung against the wall, but so as to be inaccessible to the inmate of the room. The door was locked on the outside, and I was left to my meditations.

My first thought was, of course, home—I do not mean Lady Mary's, for that was never a home

to me—but my true home—the home and household of my heart. My wife, Francesca—poor child! I said, what will become of thee? Alone in London—I dread to think. Oh! let me fly to thee! I rushed to the bed—I tore off the clothes. I tied the sheets together in a long knot. I rushed to the window. It was fastened down and securely barred. All escape that way seemed impossible. I stamped, I thundered against the door, the floor. I broke the panes themselves to pieces, and shouted aloud through the aperture. But no voice answered. My words seemed lost in vastness and vacuity. No one came near me. I was left to my own reflections. Oh! how I raved and roared. My passion was frightful—but I was powerless. I could do nothing. I strove to get at the lamp, at the fire, that I might burn the house and take my chance of an escape during the tumult. But even here I was baffled. In a word, I could devise no method of getting out, and the agony of thought was worse than madness. At length I threw myself on the floor, and sobbed myself to sleep. To sleep—aye and to dream—but those were nightmare dreams of horror.

I slept about an hour. When I awoke I could scarcely think that last night's scene was real. It was now day. I started up. I was still dressed.

I looked around; the lamp still faintly burned; the fire was expiring slowly. I saw that it was all true. I was a prisoner. Why? Wherefore? This I could not answer. Dom Balthazar occurred to me. But why should he imprison me? This was not the way to get a reward from a loving, heartbroken, dovelike pair of parents such as I had. I rejected the thought. But then was it not a contrivance to secure me so as to practice against Francesca? I started to my feet at the suggestion. Yes—this it was—this it was—the secret was out. I am undone—and she?—oh! I was like a wild beast. I roared, I raved, I raged against my prison. They will decoy her—they will bear her away—she will be murdered—and I—am powerless. After a wild paroxysm, I must have fallen insensible, for when I recovered I found food placed near me—bread and water—but I regarded it not. The pangs of hunger had not yet seized me. My mental sufferings were now at fever heat. Reader! will you believe it? I lay in this place for three whole months. I saw no one but servants. I was denied paper, or pens, or ink; to my questions I received no answer. At the end of that time I was free. I flew as if on wings to the place where I had left Francesca, hoping against hope that I should find her there. She was gone—the people of the

house knew nothing of her. She had received a letter the morning after I had been seized. She sat up for me the whole night—poor girl?—wild, wondering, agitated. In the morning a letter was brought from Mr. Smith. She opened and read it; she danced with joy. Oh! I am going to him, she said. She dressed and left the house; she had never returned. I rushed upstairs—the room was as I had left it. There was the bed unlain on—the withered violets—the little trunk which contained our all in the corner—the volume of Tasso which she had been reading, open and turned down, just as she had left it in her hurry. My papers were untouched; my few books still ready for my hand in the usual place. All reminded me of her, and my irreparable loss. I looked into the people's eyes for tidings. Alas! they could give none. I felt my heart sicken; my brain turned round. I fell down in convulsions.

Five weeks passed. The crisis of my fever was gone. In my frenzy I had revealed all—my real name and rank—Francesca's rights—my fearful sufferings. When I recovered, I was in a room which I thought I knew again. A nurse was sitting at my bedside. She put her hand to her lips and made a sign to be still. I lay down. This, said I, also is a dream. It is like my old

room at Twickenham—but this cannot be. Yet it was. For a few days I was better—I rapidly recovered. I was well. Lady Mary came into my room. She looked at me coldly, and said—

"So you have come back. We thought you were dead long ago. We did not know you had been a madman. What do you mean to do with yourself?"

# NOTES.

NOTE Q.—CHAPTER XVIII., P. 71.—SOPHIA OF HALLE.—During her whole confinement she behaved with no less mildness than dignity, and on receiving the sacrament once every week never omitted on that awful occasion making the most solemn asseverations that she was not guilty of the crime laid to her charge. Subsequent circumstances have come to light which appear to justify her memory, and reports are current at Hanover that her character was basely defamed, and that she fell a sacrifice to the jealousy and perfidy of the Countess of Platen, favourite mistress of Ernest Augustus, George the First's father. Being enamoured of Count Konigsmark, who slighted her overtures, jealousy took possession of her breast; she determined to sacrifice both the lover and the princess to her vengeance, and circumstances favoured her design.

Those who exculpate Sophia, assert either that a common visit was construed into an act of criminality, or that the Countess of Platen, at a late hour, summoned Count Konigsmark in the name of the princess, though without her connivance; and that on being introduced Sophia was surprised at his intrusion; that on leaving the apartment he was discovered by Ernest Augustus, whom the countess had placed in the gallery, and was instantly assassinated by persons whom she had suborned for that purpose.

It is impossible at this distance of time to discover and trace the circumstances of this mysterious transaction, at which no person at the Court of Hanover durst at that time deliver his opinion. But the sudden murder of Count Konigsmark may be urged as a corroboration of this statement, for had his guilt and that of Sophia been un-

equivocal, would he not have been arrested and brought to a trial for the purpose of proving their connection, and confronting him with the unfortunate princess?

Many persons of credit at Hanover have not scrupled, since the death of Ernest Augustus and George the First, to express their belief that the imputation cast on Sophia was false and unjust. It is also reported that her husband having made an offer of reconciliation, she gave this disdainful answer: "If what I am accused of is true, I am unworthy of *his* bed; and if my accusation is false, he is unworthy of *mine*. I will not accept his offer."

George the Second was fully convinced of his mother's innocence. He once made an attempt to see her, and even crossed the Aller on horseback, opposite to the Castle, but was prevented from having an interview by the Baron de Bulow, to whose care the Elector, her husband, had committed her. Had she survived his accession, he intended to restore her to liberty, and acknowledge her as Queen Dowager. He secretly kept her portrait in his possession, and the morning after the news of the death of George the First had reached London, Mr. Howard observed (in the antechamber of the new King's apartment) a picture of a woman in the electoral robes, which proved to be that of Sophia.

George the Second told Queen Caroline that in making some repairs in the Palace of Hanover, the bones of Count Konigsmark were found under the floor of the antechamber, which led to the apartment of Sophia. The Queen mentioned this fact to Sir Robert Walpole, and in various conversations which she held on this subject, she appeared fully convinced of her innocence.—COXE'S *Walpole*.

NOTE R. — CHAPTER XXIV., P. 207. — LORD CHESTERFIELD.—For some years previous to the death of George I., Chesterfield had been the favourite among many suitors for the hand of his Majesty's daughter, by Schulenberg, created in her own right, Countess of Walsingham, and considered as long as her father lived, as likely to turn out one of the wealthiest heiresses in the kingdom. Her mother wished her to be George II's. mistress, but this was rather too strong, even for him. Perhaps also Queen Caroline, who was in all other respects so accommodating, thought that her husband might do better than with his own supposed half sister. George I. opposed himself to the young lady's subsequent

inclinations for C., in consequence, it was said, of Chesterfield's notorious addiction to gambling. She took her own way, as ladies usually do, so soon as circumstances permitted :—Lady Walsingham became Lady Chesterfield. Chesterfield's house in Grosvenor Square was next door to the Duchess of Kendal's (Madame Schulenberg), and from this time he was domesticated with the mother as well as the daughter.* The ancient mistress suggested and stimulated legal measures respecting a will of George I., which George II., was said to have suppressed and destroyed, and by which, as the Duchess alleged, the late King had made a splendid provision for Lady Walsingham; and at last, rather than submit to a judicial examination of the affair. George II. compromised the suit by a payment of £20,000 to the Earl and Countess of Chesterfield.

It may be thought unlikely that so utterly selfish a man as Chesterfield would take this trouble about an election in the country. The following anecdote, mentioned by his biographer, will show to what lengths he proceeded for the sake of a vote:—"The late Lord R ——, with many good qualities and even learning and parts, had a strong desire of being thought skilful in physic, and was very expert in bleeding. Lord Chesterfield, who knew his foible, and on a particular occasion wished to have his vote, came to him one morning, and after having conversed upon indifferent matters complained of the headache, and desired his lordship to feel his pulse. It was found to beat high, and a hint of losing blood given. 'I have no objection, and as I hear your lordship has a masterly hand, will you try your lancet upon me?' '*Apropos*,' said Lord Chesterfield, after the operation, 'do you go to the House to-day?' Lord R—— answered, '*I did not intend to go, not being sufficiently informed of the question which is to be debated, but you, who have considered it, which side will you be of?*' The earl having gained his confidence, easily directed his judgment; he carried him to the House, and got him to vote as he pleased. He used afterwards to say that none of his friends had done as much as he, having literally *bled* for the good of his country."—*Life*, vol. 1, p. 131.

* Dr. Maty, Chesterfield's biographer, alluding to this, says:—"He divided his time between his business in his own house, and his attentions and duties at the other. Minerva presided in the first, and in the last Apollo with the Muses." But how came Apollo and the Muses to dwell with old Schulenberg? Her only companion was George I. transformed into a Raven.

This noble lord used to relate the following story, which Mr. Carruthers, in his life of Pope, says is "incredible." It appears almost "incredible" that these fine gentlemen and wits should live in such an atmosphere of falsehoods. "I went," he says, "to Pope one morning at Twickenham, and found a large folio Bible, with gilt clasps, lying before him on his table, and as I knew his way of thinking upon that book, I asked him jocosely if he was going to write an answer to it? 'It is a present,' said he, 'or rather a legacy, from my old friend the Bishop of Rochester. I went to take my leave of him yesterday in the Tower, when I saw this Bible upon the table. The Bishop said to me, "My friend Pope, considering your infirmities and my age and exile, it is not likely we should ever meet again, and therefore I give you this legacy to remember me by. Take it home with you, and let me advise you to abide by it." "Does your lordship abide by it yourself?" "I do." "If you do, my lord, it is but lately; may I beg to know what new lights or arguments have prevailed with you now to entertain an opinion so contrary to that which you entertained of that book all the former part of your life?" The Bishop replied, "We have not time to talk of these things; but take home the book I will abide by it, and I recommend you to do so too; and so God bless you." "The tenor, tone, and dates of Atterbury's correspondence," adds Carruthers, "all refute this story." But why did Chesterfield invent such a lie? What was his object in representing the Bishop as a disbeliever in the Bible? It makes one think of Dr. Colenso's strange assertion, "that *all* the bishops entertain the same ideas as himself, but are afraid to make them public." A famous scholar and divine of the last century, Dr. Middleton, a notorious disbeliever, subscribed the thirty-nine articles politically merely to obtain the living of Hascombe, though he was a man of good fortune, and he thus apologises for it: "Though there are many things in the Church which I wholly dislike, yet while I am content to acquiesce in the *ill*, I should be glad to taste a little of the good; and to have some amends for the ugly *assent and consent*, which no man of sense can approve." Reading over these things and considering the crimes which are thus daily committed for the sake of a little distinction one is reminded of what Pope Urban the Eighth said of Cardinal Richelieu, "*Se gli è un Dio lo pagara; ma veramente se non è Dio è galant uomo.*" If there be a God, he will pay for it; but if there be not a God, he is a fine fellow! The

Pope's own language leaves some doubt on the mind whether His Holiness himself had any very decided belief. He who regards the world as it is can hardly be persuaded that any one really believes in a future, though outwardly everything goes on, as if there were nothing more certain.

The "Quarterly Review" (Earl Stanhope probably) in commenting on this man's infamous letters to his son, says: —"We give Lord Chesterfield full credit for his parental zeal and anxiety; in this respect he was very amiable; but we are afraid he went to his grave—he certainly drew up his last will—without ever having reflected seriously on the nature of his own dealings with his son's mother, or on—to speak of nothing more serious still—the personal, domestic, and social mischiefs inevitably consequent on the sort of conduct which his precept as well as his example held up for the imitation of his own base-born boy. By his will he leaves five hundred pounds to Madame de Bouchet, 'as some recompense for the injury he had done her.' The story we believe to have been this. About a year before Chesterfield's marriage, when he was ambassador in Holland, he was the great lion, and, moreover, the *Cupidon déchainé* of the Hague. Some of his adventures excited in a particular manner the horror of an accomplished Frenchwoman of gentle birth, who was living there as *dame de compagnié* to two or three Dutch girls—orphans, heiresses, and beauties. Her eloquent denunciations of his audacious practices, and her obvious alarm lest any of her fair charges should happen to attract his attention, were communicated somehow to the dazzling ambassador; *and he made a bet that he would seduce herself first, and then the prettiest of her pupils.* With the duenna, at least, he succeeded. She seems to have resided ever afterwards in or near London, in the obscurest retirement and solitude—cut off for ever from country, family, and friends. Five hundred pounds recompense! *Five hundred pounds* from one of the wealthiest lords in England, who had no children—Philip himself had died some years before—and whose vast property was entirely at his own disposal. It is satisfactory to add that she refused "the recompense." In the magnificent mansion which the Earl erected in Audley Street, you may still see his favourite apartments furnished and decorated as he left them—among the rest what he boasted of as "the finest room in London," and perhaps even now it remains unsurpassed, his spacious and beautiful library looking on the finest private garden in

London. The walls are covered half way up with rich and classical stores of literature. Above the cases are in close series the portraits of eminent authors—French and English—with most of whom he had conversed; over these, and immediately under the massive cornice, extend all round in foot-long capitals the Horatian lines—

NUNC VETERUM LIBRIS NUNC SOMNO ET INERTIBUS HORIS
DUCERE SOLICITÆ JUCUNDA OBLIVIA VITÆ.

On the mantel pieces and cabinets stand busts of old orators, interspersed with voluptuous vases and bronzes, antique, or Italian, and airy statuettes of opera nymphs. We shall never recall that princely room without fancying Chesterfield receiving in it a visit of his only child's mother—*while probably some new victim* or accomplice was sheltered in the dim mysterious little boudoir within—which still remains also in its original blue damask and fretted gold work, as described to Madame de Moncouseil. Did this scene of "sweet forgetfulness" rise before Mrs. Norton's vision when she framed that sadly beautiful episode of the faded broken-hearted mistress, reproaching in his library amidst the busts of bard, and orators, and sages, the

"Protestant and protesting gentleman,"

who had robbed her innocence and blasted her life?—*Quart. Rev.*, vol 76, pp. 483, 484.

So far, Earl Stanhope. But his allusion to Mrs. Norton is hardly fortunate, as those will say whenever the *Autobiography of Rosina, Lady Lytton*, the most singular, eloquent, earnest, and pathetic work in the English language, comes to be published, as no doubt it one day will. The writer of these notes has read it—read it, he may confess, with tears in his eyes, and with the deepest sympathy for a woman of wonderful genius. The Duke of Wellington was accustomed to say when his dispatches were published in their entirety, that many statues would come down; the same may be declared when the tragic life of this much injured lady shall have been presented to the public. A great many false masks will then be pulled off, and the virtuous people of our own time will figure in the same gallery with those of the apostolic age of George I. and George II.

Whether Chesterfield, says the writer just cited, had the satisfaction of making his filial pupil either a libertine or an

infidel we have no sufficient evidence. We suppose there is no question that the noble tutor failed in his grand object of social elegance, and that as Chesterfield had for his father a saturnine Jacobite, so he had a pedantic sloven for his son. But we hope these lines, which we take from the fly leaf of a friend's copy of the fifth edition of the letters (1774), the handwriting unknown to that friend, though he is well skilled in such matters, have no merit but their point:—

"Vile Stanhope—demons blush to tell;
In twice two hundred places
Has shown his son the road to hell,
Escorted by the Graces;
But little did the ungenerous lad
Concern himself about them,
For base, degenerate, meanly bad—
He sneaked to hell without them."

Of his wife the reviewer says: "Her birth was, according to the now obsolete notions of that time, an illustrious distinction, to which were added a peerage in her own right, a handsome fortune, the prospect of a great one, and unless her painters rivalled her lovers, no common share of beauty. In truth, that this tall, dark-haired, graceful woman sprung from the amours of a Hanoverian King and a Dutch built concubine seems to us, after all, very doubtful. These pretensions and advantages, however, were all hers, when she selected Chesterfield from a host of suitors; and certainly during the flower of her life and his own, he was a most profligate husband."—*Quart. Rev.*, vol. 76, pp. 486, 487.

It is to be regretted that Lord Stanhope, who could tell so much and who has so thoroughly honest a mind, has not completed his edition of Chesterfield's letters by a plain outspoken memoir of that eminent ornament of our country, and his no less excellent friends and comrogues.

NOTE S.—CHAPTER XXIV., P. 213.—LORD SCARBOROUGH.—This man was one of Lord Chesterfield's set. He destroyed himself in the most deliberate manner; being in the most perfect possession of his faculties. In the morning he paid a long visit to Lord Chesterfield, and opened himself to him with great earnestness on many subjects. It happened in the course of the conversation that something was spoken of which related to Sir William Temple's negotiations, and the two friends not agreeing about the circumstances, Lord Chesterfield, whose memory at all times was remarkably good, referred Lord Scarborough to the page of

Sir William's memoirs where the matter was mentioned. After his lordship's death, the book was found open at that very page. His body, in fact, was found surrounded with several volumes which he had brought into the room, and piled about him with the pistol in his mouth. These volumes treated of self-destruction, and it was generally reported at the time that his conversation with Chesterfield mainly related to a question of a future, and that Chesterfield ridiculed the notion as being absurd. He was to have been married the following day, to Isabella, the widow of William, Duke of Manchester, a woman celebrated for her beauty. Lady Mary, in a letter to Lady Pomfret, thus alludes to the suicide:—"Have you not reasoned much on the surprising conclusion of Lord Scarborough. * * I am most inclined to superstition in this accident, and think it a judgment for the death of a poor silly soul, that you know he caused some years ago." Lord Wharncliffe says that Lady Kingston, to whom Scarborough behaved with the most unfeeling and savage falsehood and cruelty, is meant; she was Lady Mary's sister. The annotator has reason to believe that his conduct to poor Howe had something also to do with his remorse. Had we the whole of Lady Mary's correspondence, this matter doubtless would have been cleared up.

"I have discovered," says Israel d'Israeli, "that a considerable correspondence of Lady Mary's, for more than twenty years' with the widow of Colonel Forester, who had retired to Rome, *has been stifled in the birth.* These letters, with *other MSS.* of Lady Mary, were given by Mrs. Forester to Philip Thicknesse, with a discretionary power to publish. They were held as a great acquisition by Thicknesse and his bookseller; but when they had printed off the first thousand sheets, there were parts which they considered might give pain to some of the family. Thicknesse says, "Lady Mary had been in many places uncommonly severe upon her husband, for all her letters were loaded with a scrap or two of poetry at him. There was one passage which he recollected—

> "Just left my bed, a lifeless trunk,
> And scarce a dreaming head."

A negotiation took place with an agent of Lord Bute's. After some time Miss Forester put in her claims for the manuscripts, and the whole *terminated* as Thicknesse tells us,

*in her* obtaining a pension, and Lord Bute all the MSS. *Curiosities of Literature.* The reader cannot fail to admire this arrangement, by which Lord Bute, with £1,350,000 of Mr. W. Montagu's money, does not himself purchase the manuscripts of his mother-in-law, but makes the British public pay for them, by giving a pension to their possessor. These letters would have thrown great light on the times and their public characters; no wonder that history has been called "a liar;" it is compounded of things that appear to the public, but which are wholly different from things as they are.

Thanks also to the zeal of executors; we know but little of the real facts that cause all history; but the external features that seem to cause it we well know. The result is perpetual delusion, which seems, indeed, to be the condition of all things in this terrestrial orb. The date of the correspondence with the Forresters is not given. We shall never now know the thousand miseries which Lady Mary endured with her spouse. In 1722 she was so badly off as to be selling her diamonds. Soon after she says, "I run about though I have five thousand pins and needles running into my heart." I doubt if she ever had a happy day, for in a letter from Rome to Lady Pomfret she says, "If among the fountains I could find the waters of Lethe I should be completely happy:—

> "Like a deer that is wounded I bleed and run on,
> And fain I my torment would hide,
> But alas; 'tis in vain, for wherever I run,
> The bloody dart sticks in my side."

And I carry the serpent that poisons the paradise I am in."

These are not the only memorials of Lady Mary which the Butes destroyed. After Lord Hervey's death, his eldest son, sealed up and sent her letters to his father, with an assurance that none of them had been read or opened. The late Lord Orford affirmed that Sir Robert Walpole did the same with regard to these she had written to his second wife (Skerrett). That *dessous des cartes*, says Lady Louisa Stuart, who had probably seen these letters, or heard of them from her mother, would *here* have betrayed that Lord and Lady Hervey had lived together upon very amicable terms, "as well bred as if not married at all," according to the demands of Mrs. Millimant in the play; but without any strong sympathies, and more like a French

couple than an English one. * * At the time of Lady Mary Wortley's return home, Lady Hervey was living in great intimacy with Lady Bute. On hearing of her mother's arrival she came to her, owning herself embarrassed by the fear of giving her pain or offence, but yet compelled to declare that formerly something had passed betweeen her and Lady Mary which made any renewal of their acquaintance impossible. No explanation followed. But surely the real reason must have been well known to Lady Bute. There was no love lost between this beautiful pair. In 1725 Lady Mary writes:—"Lady Hervey and Lady Bristol have quarrelled in such a polite manner, that they have given one another all the titles so liberally bestowed amongst the ladies at Billingsgate." * * * Again: "Lady Hervey makes the top figure in town, and is so good as to show twice a week at the drawing-room, and twice more at the opera for the entertainment of the public." * * * Again in 1739; "The melancholy catastrophe of poor Lady Letchmere is too extraordinary not to attract the attention of every body. After having played away her reputation and fortune, she has poisoned herself. * * Lady Hervey, by aiming too high, has fallen very low, and is reduced to trying to persuade folks she has an intrigue, and gets nobody to believe her, the man in question taking a great deal of pains to clear himself of the scandal." There was a Mrs. Murray, who was well acquainted with both, and who seems to have known a little of Lady Mary. We find the latter writing about her to her sister in 1726:—"Mrs. Murray is in open wars with me, in such a manner as makes her very ridiculous without doing me much harm. Firstly, she was pleased to attack me in very Billingsgate language at a masquerade, where she was as visible as ever she was in her own clothes. I had the temper not only to keep silence myself, but enjoined it to *the person** with me, who would have been very glad to have shown his great skill in rousing upon that occasion. She endeavoured to sweeten him by very exorbitant praises of his person, which might even have been mistaken for making love from a woman of less celebrated virtue, and concluded her oration with pious warnings to him to avoid the company of one so unworthy his regard as myself, *who, to her certain knowledge,*

* Who was this person? Was it Lord Hervey?—for Mrs Murray was a great friend of Lady H., and may have been set upon Lady Mary.

*loved another man.* This last article, I own, piqued me more than all her preceding civilities." We are not told who this favoured gentleman was. Some short time before, my lady had written—"There are but three pretty men in England, and they are all in love with me at this present writing." Mr. Wortley Montagu, senior, was probably not one of these "pretty men." One hardly knows whether most to pity, to scorn, or to laugh at him.

The following melancholy picture of Lady Mary is drawn by her own hand, under the date 1736:—

"With toilsome steps I passed through life's dull road,
No pack horse half so weary of his load;
And when this dirty journey shall conclude,
To what new realms is then my way pursued?
Say then does the embodied spirit fly
To happier climes and to a better sky?
Or sinking, mixes with its kindred clay,
And sleeps a whole eternity away?
Or shall this form be once again renewed,
With all its frailties, all its hopes endued?
Acting once more on this detested stage,
Passions of youth, infirmities of age.
I see in Tully what the ancients thought,
And read unprejudiced what moderns taught;
But no conviction from my reading springs—
Most dubious on the most important things.
Yet one short moment would at once explain,
What all philosophy has sought in vain;
Would clear all doubt and terminate all pain.
Why then not hasten that decisive hour,
Still in my view and ever in my power?
Why should I drag along this life I hate,
Without one thought to mitigate the weight?
Whence this mysterious bearing to exist,
When every joy is lost, and every hope dismissed;
In chains, in darkness, wherefore should I stay,
And mourn in prison whilst I keep the key?"

These verses were given by Lady Mary to Lady Pomfret, who sent a copy of them to her correspondent Lady Hertford. That lady's reply was as follows:—

"My dear Lady Pomfret, Lady Mary Wortley's verses have a wit and strength that appear in all her writings, but her mind must have been in a very melancholy disposition when she composed them. I hope it was only a gloomy hour, which soon blew over to make way for more cheerful prospects. If I had been near her then I should have persuaded her to look into the New Testament, in hopes that *it* might have afforded her the conviction which she sought in vain from Tully and other authors. She has so much judgment and penetration, that I am satisfied if the Scriptures

were to become the subject of her contemplation, and if she would read them with the same attention and impartiality that she does any other books of knowledge, they would disperse a thousand mists which, without such assistance, will too certainly hang upon the finest understandings."

Lady Pomfret did not share her correspondent's hopes, for in reply she says:—

"What a pity and terror does it create to see wit, beauty, nobility, and riches, after a full possession of fifty years, talk that language, and talk it so feelingly that all who read must know that it comes from the heart. But, indeed, dear madam, you make me smile when you proposed putting the New Testament into the hands of the author."

In a subsequent part of the correspondence Lady Pomfret sent to Lady Hertford Lady Mary's town eclogue, entitled Saturday, in which an altered beauty laments "her disfigured face," and both the ladies treat it as descriptive of Lady Mary's own case.

"Nothing," she says, "can be more natural than her complaint for the loss of her beauty; but as that was only one of her various powers to charm, I should have imagined she would have felt only a small part of the regret that many others have suffered in a like misfortune, who having no claim to admiration, but the loveliness of their persons, have found all hope of that vanish much earlier in life than Lady Mary, for, if I mistake not, she was near forty before she had to deplore the loss of beauty greater than ever I saw in any face but her own."

Lady Mary was born in 1690, which makes her mishap—whatever it was—about 1730.

After this she always wore a mask. In 1733 Pope published his imitation of the first satire of the second book of Horace. In the lines referring to "furious Sappho" we read Pope's solution of the mask—one perfectly dreadful to think of, but which the poet would surely not have dared to print if there had been no foundation laid for it, and no corroboration of it in the lady's own personal disfigurement.

After she left England she was never seen but in a mask and domino. Her visitors were numerous and her allusions to them are hardly complimentary. Writing to Lady Pomfret she says, "This is at present infested with English, who torment me as much as the frogs and lice did the palace of Pharoah, and are surprised that I will not suffer them to

skip about my house from morning till night." These visitors brought back to England strange reports.

Croker, in the *Quarterly Review*, alluding to all these scandals, says, "Lord Wharncliffe, although he does advert to one or two of these stories, appears to be by no means apprized how Augean the task would be of clearing Lady Mary's character from all the imputations which her contemporaries for half a century concurred in heaping upon it. We are not going to rake up all that filth, nor indeed to go farther into such questions than the observations of the editors lead us; but we think that a regard for moral justice and historical truth obliges us to enter our protest against the entire and absolute acquittal which Mr. Dallaway and Lord Wharncliffe, both writing under the influence of a laudable partiality, are inclined to pronounce upon her whole conduct. We abhor, with Lord Wharncliffe, Pope's detestable and unmanly charges—*inter politos non nominanda*—which have eventually done at least as much injury to his own character as to Lady Mary's, which constitute the chief drawback of his popularity, and will for ever exclude his work from the unrestricted perusal of youth and innocence. But on the other hand it must be recollected that if Pope had dared to make even one—the least—of these atrocious attacks on a lady of respectable character, he must have been either shut up in a madhouse or a jail, or at all events have been punished by total exclusion from society."—*Quart. Rev.*, vol. 58, p. 187.

Note T.—Chapter XXV., P. 226.—The election scene described in this chapter, and the observations made by Mr. Montagu on the indifference of the House of Commons in *his* day to bribery, while it made loud demonstrations of anger against it in public, seem to be as true of our own time as they were in the days of George the Second. In the *Standard* report of the Bridgewater Election Commissioners, September 24th, 1869, we read as follows:—

Mr. G. S. Pool then stepped into the witness box. He said efforts had been made by gentlemen to put down bribery in the town, but so long as the general opinion of the House of Commons was what it was, the general opinion of the public would be the same. There was a feeling abroad now that the House of Commons was not in earnest. The feeling was that while this was being probed to the very bottom it ought to be probed upwards also (applause). He referred to the case of Bristol, and that of some of the

Liberal party of Bridgewater, who went to Mr. Drake, a gentleman who had been knighted for services rendered to the Liberal party, and said that showed that the Liberal party in the House of Commons *did look at this offence as a thing to be connived at*, and until there was a different opinion in the House of Commons, it would not be different in the provinces.

Mr. Anstey said it was to be hoped, now they had the case of Brogden they would deal with it sharply.

Mr. Westropp, a former candidate, having said on examinasion—You know it is no pleasure for a gentleman to spend money in bribery.

The Chairman (Mr. Price, Q.C.) made answer—If you ask me if it is any pleasure, I must say I believe some men feel it downright pleasure to come down and corrupt a constituency, as in the case of Mr. Brogden.

Mr. Anstey—And if Mr. Vanderbyl did not participate in that pleasure, he would not have participated with Mr. Brogden in doing so.

Here we have it stated authoritatively, by two of her Majesty's Commissioners, that these persons actually entered upon the corruption of those unfortunate drunken wretches of Bridgewater, as a matter of personal gratification. It remains to be seen whether Mr. Pool's words are true or not? whether parliament will interfere and punish? whether the Lord Chancellor will allow them to administer law and the jail from the bench at petty sessions—for we suppose they are J. P.'s? If all goes on as usual will anybody believe that bribery is seriously regarded by those who are in authority?

But *will* the House deal with *any* case sharply? It may well be doubted. Whigs and Tories are equally debased and corrupted. There is hardly an honourable member who is not tarred with the brush. Electoral demoralization in the present age, seems to have reached the acme of corruption. It is appalling to look upon; and the practices detailed by Mr. Montagu are now as rife as in the worst days of the Georges. What must be the feelings of the bribed and beastly constituency of Bridgewater, when they knew that their venality has ended in the self-destruction of the late Lord Justice Clerk; and who can read the melancholy termination of this unfortunate gentleman's life without a pang of sorrow? After the burlesque comes the tragedy. The following is taken from the *Scotsman*:—

"The mystery connected with the disappearance of Lord Justice Clerk Patton has at length received a very melancholy solution in the discovery of his body on Friday afternoon. The discovery was made in the bed of the river Almond, immediately beyond Buchanty Spout, and it is painful to have to add that the appearance presented by the corpse fully confirms the worst surmises that have been formed as to the manner in which his lordship came by his death. Malloch, the Perth boatman, who has for the last three days had charge of the exploring party, found that the apparatus with which he was supplied was insufficient for the thorough examination of the deep pools at Buchanty. He accordingly returned to Perth, and provided himself with a sand-boat boom or pole, such as is used by the boatmen to propel their vessels on the Tay. On his arrival at Glenalmond on Friday morning he attached an iron creeper to the lower end of the boom, and commenced dragging the river about twelve o'clock. He was assisted by Mr Forrest, the overseer at the Cairnies; and a number of the workmen on the Glenalmond estates were employed in guiding the boat from which the exploration was conducted, by means of ropes stretched from the river banks. Attention was in the first instance turned to the deep pool in the immediate vicinity of the fall; but at this point the strength of the current is very great, and the tests applied during the early part of the week had satisfied the searchers that there was little likelihood of the body being found there. The party accordingly worked gradually down the river, but the undertaking was found to be one of the most tedious and difficult nature. On reaching Buchanty Bridge, Malloch became much more hopeful of success. At this point the chasm through which the river flows become considerably wider, the strength of the current decreases, and a series of whirlpools are formed in deep hollows, scooped out of the solid rock. These were in succession examined with special care, but the first examination was without result. Malloch, however, was satisfied that it was here the body must have lodged if it went into the river at the point supposed. This impression was strengthened by the circumstance that several of the parties who explored the river on Tuesday and Wednesday had stated that they thought they felt a yielding substance in one of the pools near the centre of the river, about ten or fifteen yards below the bridge, and 150 yards from Buchanty Spout. It was accordingly resolved to institute a second search, and, beginning underneath the bridge, Malloch again worked his way slowly down the river. The pool above referred to, and which is upwards of fifteen feet deep, he dragged with special care. For more than an hour he continued working the creeper over the rock bottom. Weeds, shrubs, and branches of trees were brought to the surface, but there seemed not the least indication of the presence of the object sought for. The boatman, however, persevered in his exertions, and shortly after three o'clock he became convinced that the body lay at the bottom of the pool. With great care he again dragged his pole along the bottom, and in a few minutes he found that he had hooked some heavy substance. The catch he had obtained was,

however, the slightest possible, and the greatest caution was necessary to prevent the creeper losing its hold. The few spectators who had collected about the bridge now rushed down to the water's edge, and the excitement became painfully intense; but Malloch kept himself perfectly cool and collected throughout. Instructing his assistants to keep the boat perfectly steady, he proceeded to raise the object he had hold of gradually to the surface. He had not obtained sufficient hold to enable him to lift it perpendicularly, and found it necessary to employ the pole rather as a lever to float it slowly upwards. At length he succeeded in bringing the object to the surface, but at a considerable distance from the boat. It now became apparent that the object was a corpse, and the interest of the bystanders was correspondingly intensified. Instead of taking the body into the boat, Malloch deemed it advisable to work it slowly towards the water's edge; and this he succeeded in doing, but not without considerable difficulty. An assistant on the bank straightway grasped the lappel of a coat, he in turn being grasped by another person to prevent him falling over the sloping bank into the deep pool beneath. Malloch thereupon dropped the pole, and springing ashore, got upon the point of a projecting rock, and succeeded in bringing the body to the land. When examined, it was found to have been hooked by the right hand. It had been lying with the face downwards; but in rising, it turned slowly round and floated for sometime with the face upwards. The forehead was seen to be much bruised; the neck and breast were completely exposed, and there was a cut across the throat. It is said that the wound was not very deep; and there seems to have been but little blood upon the clothes, which consisted of a suit of black. Besides the injuries described there were no other marks upon the body, and the countenance is described as having been quite placid and serene. On being brought to the bank the body was taken charge of by Constable Wilson, of the county constabulary. It was wrapped in a white sheet, and conveyed on a stretcher to Glenalmond House, where it was placed in one of the bedrooms to await the attendance of the proper authorities. Malloch, the boatman was immediately driven to Perth, where he communicated his discovery to Mr. Jameson, procurator fiscal, and Mr. Gordon, chief constable of the county. At a quarter-past five o'clock the Procurator Fiscal and Dr. Absolon left Perth, for Glenalmond House, for the purpose of making a *post-mortem* examination.

After the discovery of the body the spot where the razor, case, and necktie were found, on Tuesday afternoon was visited with renewed interest. It now seemed but too evident that the case had been one of suicide, and the whole circumstance pointed to the inference that there had been deliberate premeditation. It will be remembered that the articles referred to were found on a bank overhanging the fall of Buchanty. The deceased appears to have advanced to the edge of this bank, which stands about five or six feet above the torrent, to have there cut his throat, and then allowed himself to fall backwards, instinctively clutching as he fell the ash sapling growing on the bank, which was subse-

quently found with bloody finger marks. The body would be swept at once into the deep pool below the linn, from which it subsequently drifted downwards to the pool where it was discovered.

The Right Hon. George Patton was born at Perth in 1803, and was consequently in his 67th year. He received his early education at the academy of that city, from which he was sent to the University of Edinburgh, and subsequently to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he took the English declamation prize. He was admitted a member of the Faculty of Advocates in 1828. His politics were staunch Conservative, and when Lord Derby came into office in 1859 he was appointed Solicitor General for Scotland. In 1866 he became Lord Advocate, and was elected member for Bridgewater, *which he contested twice at great expense.* In the same year he was raised to the dignity of Lord Justice Clerk in the room of Lord Glencorse, who succeeded the now Lord Colonsay as Lord Justice General. About the same time he was made a member of the Privy Council.

This gentleman had been summoned by the Commissioners to explain his connection with the borough and the charges of bribery which had been made against him. Knowing that an examination would cause such a report from the Commissioners as must make his further retention of the judicial office impossible, he destroyed himself. A few more incidents of this kind, and bribery *may* become so universally odious, that Parliament will be compelled to make it, as it ought long since to have been made, a felony, punishable by hard labour.

While these pages are passing through the press we read in the papers the following letter descriptive of this notorious borough. It bears the signature H. Is it possible that it comes from Hogden's Ghost? There is another borough, that of Wednesbury in Staffordshire, where every one of the atrocities mentioned in Bridgewater, was repeated last election, with more than tenfold virulence; but *it* escapes while B. is ruined. This demonstrates the general humbug.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir, The Liberal press—more particularly the semi-local West of England portion of it—is loud in its complaints of the "inquisition," as they please to term it, which is holding its "terrorism" over the good folk, the "free and independent" of Bridgewater. While one portion attributes the "terrorism" and "inquisition" to the love of power on the part of the Commissioners, and the opportunity laid open to them of exerting it, the other lays it at the door of the Conservative party in general, and the bias of the Commissioners in particular. Referring to this last agitation (which by its prominence had come more particu-

larly before his notice), Mr. Anstey remarked a day or two ago that the fact was that two out of the three Commissioners were of Liberal politics. As regards the former, it goes for what it is worth. The Commissioners have a public duty to perform, and it is a duty of the most unpleasant and onerous description. They have each expressed himself as being sick and disgusted at the whole affair, and the Chairman has been thoroughly knocked up and prostrated by the unceasing toil and hard work.

The fact is this. The Commissioners inquired first into the state of affairs in the Liberal camp in the borough. The Liberal members were unseated on petition, and, therefore, it was most natural to inquire into the corrupt practices which rendered their election void in the first instance. The most gloomy and notorious forebodings were only too well realised. *A nest of the vilest corruption was unearthed and the most wide-spread and abominable villainy brought to light.* Now, I do not for a moment wish to be considered invidious. The Conservative party was bad. There was very little to choose between the one and the other, as far as their antecedents were concerned.

The poor uneducated voters have given their evidence far more satisfactorily and honestly than have the "gentlemen"—gentlemen, forsooth!—who have met with such plain and unequivocal treatment at the Commissioners' hands. When we see magistrates, town councillors, solicitors, and the leading inhabitants of the town prevaricating and quibbling with the questions put to them—nay, more, when we see these most "respectable" of the people—men of rank and education—stooping to the most paltry pretences and meannesses to endeavour to hide their misdeeds, *when they commit the most unblushing perjury and are forced to give themselves the lie afterwards;* when we see all this happen daily we need feel no surprise at the plain language used by the Commissioners. One thing is certain—that did they not express themselves strongly they would never get the truth from these intelligent witnesses. It is, after all, to the conduct of these "gentlemen" that we must attribute all the evils which have come upon the constituency. If the "gentlemen," who ought to have known better, had not corrupted and attempted the artisans, who do not know better, it would never have come to pass. Let the shame and disgrace accrue to them alone.

The Commissioners are doing their disagreeable duty conscientiously and fairly. They are showing up vice in its true colours, and praising honesty when they come across it. No one need complain of their judgment, save those who, by stooping to wilful misdeeds, have laid themselves open to its full force. The Commission at Bridgewater has taught a good and wholesome lesson to every constituency in the kingdom, and it is to be hoped they will read, learn, and inwardly digest the same.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

Bridgewater, Oct. 11. H.

END OF VOL. II.

T. C. Newby, 30, Welbeck Street, Cavendish Square, London.

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